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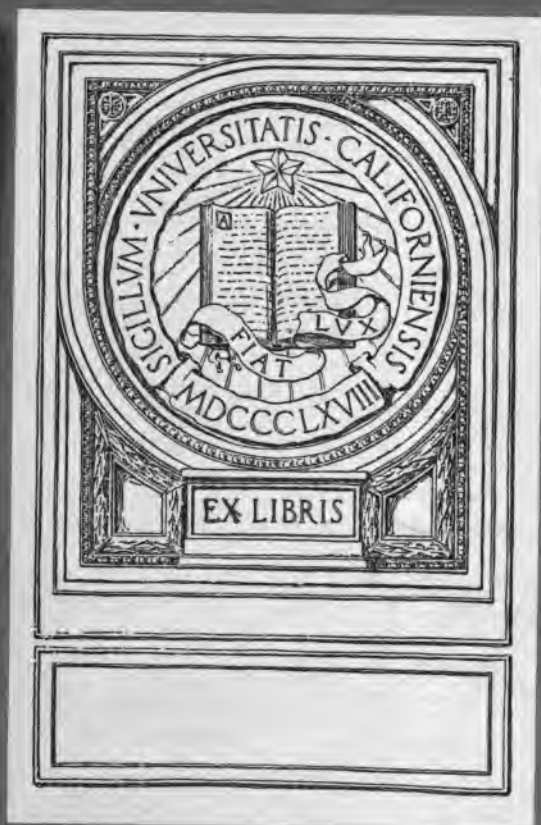
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HISTORY
of
CHILLI:

By the Author of

Letters from Paraguay





LETTERS

FROM

BUENOS AYRES AND CHILI.



A CACIQUE IN HIS DRESS OF CEREMONY.

LETTERS

FROM

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

BUENOS AYRES AND CHILI,

WITH AN ORIGINAL

HISTORY OF THE LATTER COUNTRY.

Illustrated with Engravings.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF LETTERS FROM PARAGUAY.

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

THE following is a brief account of the Writer of these Letters. At a moment when the most flattering prospects of happiness lay open to his view, and when a very few months would have put him into possession of all that can render life desirable, he was doomed to suffer the total deprivation of all his hopes ; an affair of honour followed, which terminated fatally to the aggressor, and caused this Gentleman instantly to quit England, and, in the hospitable mansion of a friend at New York, he sought and found an asylum. After some time, he was advised by his friends there, who took a lively interest in his happiness, to make a voyage to Botany Bay as a merchant, in order to draw his attention from domestic sorrows, and give a new turn to his thoughts. Convinced, at length, of the propriety of

their advice, he took his passage on board the first ship, which his friends freighted to the new colony.

The ship met with nothing but bad weather and contrary winds for some weeks; and from a succession of several heavy gales, the vessel sustained such serious injury, that the master was obliged to seek shelter in the port of Monte Video, on the river La Plata, where, as an American ship, it received a welcome reception. At this port, the Gentleman was seized with an epidemic fever, which deprived him of reason; and, in this state of mental derangement, his friend, the captain of the ship, was very reluctantly compelled to leave him under the care of the governor, and a religious order, who, with the utmost humanity, administered every comfort in their power; but all their attentions proving ineffectual, he was removed, with the utmost care, to Buenos Ayres, and placed in a convent of the Dominican Friars.

In the bosom of this community, he experienced the most humane and benevolent

attentions ; and, after some months of unwearied applications of various remedies, the good Fathers saw him restored to perfect health and understanding. From this habitation of peace, he first addressed his friends in England : and, from the correspondence which passed, in the space of about two or three years, a small number of letters was selected and arranged for publication in 1805, by the express direction of a gentleman then in office, who considered them as forming a desideratum on South American subjects, and which eventually led to the expedition under General Whitlocke. But at the time of that event taking place, he was at a mission five hundred leagues from Buenos Ayres, in the province of Guaira, situated between the great rivers Uruguay and Parana : with this nation he continued thirteen months, when a revolt of the tributary Indians took place, and the whole township joined the roving nation of the Cinguanes, under whose protection they placed themselves, taking the Gentleman and two of the religious belonging to the presidency of St. Ignatius with them into the interior, as far as the banks of the great

river Mamore, which empties itself into the river of Amazons. This revolt happened in 1806, and, from that period to the latter end of 1810, nothing more was heard of his fate. It was the general received opinion that he was dead, and, under that impression, his friends had worn mourning for him. However it pleased God to restore him to his friends by the protecting kindness of a friendly cacique; but at the time he reached Buenos Ayres, he was suffering under a complication of disorders arising from the fatigues and deprivations he had suffered for so long a period. In his former abode among the good community of St. Dominic, he received the most unbounded acts of hospitality and kindness, although the community had been greatly reduced during his absence, and only two of his former friends were now alive. After some stay at Buenos Ayres, it was thought advisable, for the restoration of his health that he should pass over to Chili, as to a more congenial climate. During his stay in that beautiful garden of the southern world the following sheets were written.

How far his prophetic opinions have been

fulfilled by the events of Europe, since he wrote them—what reliance may be had on his notions of political and commercial speculation, as it may affect the future interests and advantage of his own country, to which, though so distantly removed, he appears so warmly attached,—must be left to the information and considerate judgment of his readers.



HISTORY OF CHILI,

&c. &c.

LETTER I.

Buenos Ayres.

MY FRIEND,

I AM decidedly become a missionary enthusiast: the papers of my ever-to-be-lamented Father Hernandez, have opened my eyes to the clearest sense of revealed religion; and of what importance it is that every one, whether Jew or Gentile, Turk, or Christian, of whatever denomination, should be early initiated in the reading and true comprehension of the Bible; which not only points out the purest precepts of human duty, but the most concise, correct and immutable digest of laws and policy, that ever was framed to direct and govern the different states of man. The Jesuits were, without doubt, the most enlightened and best instructed of all the various fraternities embodied by the see of Rome. As soon as they

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were well grounded in legislative knowledge, they entered on theological, mathematical and philosophical pursuits, to which was often added the study of architecture, painting and music; in all which different laborious studies, the company of Jesus have evinced in this widely-extended continent, as well as in Europe, their profound and universal knowledge. To speak figuratively, they have, like Orpheus of old, found the means to civilize even the brute creation. That is to say, man in his state of nature; for such were the inhabitants of those immense tracts of uncultivated land, when the missionaries first appeared among them. At that time they knew not, literally speaking, good or evil, but as it related to the immediate gratification of their intemperate passions; such as gluttony, drunkenness, and sensuality, which led them to the commission of every concomitant sin. Religion they had none, unless the worship of a diabolical spirit might be termed such, whom their Maponas, a kind of sorcerers, taught them to fear, and which at this hour is held in reverence by all the unconverted Indians. These Maponas have a great influence over them; more especially in time of war, when they are consulted as to the most proper time to attack their enemies, either at home or at a distance; and the opinion these sorcerers pronounce is implicitly followed. Hence the great and insuperable diffi-

culties the first missionaries had to encounter; hence, at the instigation of those ministers, so many zealous men became martyrs; but this did not deter others from seeking the same glorious crown; for no-sooner did news arrive at their colleges, that any of their brethren had fallen sacrifices in propagating the Gospel, than it became a contest as it were, who should be appointed to succeed them. Nothing could restrain or damp their ardour, and at length, it pleased the almighty God to crown their labours with success, and to plant in those vast wilds the greatest religious democracy in the known world.

Since those highly qualified men adopted methods to civilize, and bring into the bonds of society so many millions of human beings, by the mildest, most gentle, and most conciliatory means, they only, in my opinion, ought to be considered as the sole legal conquerors of these vast regions. It is not the Spaniard, whose steps were marked with blood, and whose avarice, ambition and cruelty, would arrogate to himself the vain glory of conquering a country whose defenceless inhabitants received and welcomed them to their shores, and with the greatest hospitality supplied their every want, regarding them as the children of the great luminary, whose beneficent rays warmed and animated all nature. Then was the time to have made the people (what they pretended

to be the ostensible motive of their coming to them,) the children of Christ, and of subjecting to their King these rich and valuable kingdoms. Though lost in error, and bewildered in darkness, these poor benighted beings would have soon become the best Christians, the best subjects, and the most ready to receive instructions of any people on the face of the earth.

But the haughty Spaniard soon threw off the mask, thought no more of the professions of Christianity, or any semblance of it, but speedily made the poor Indians acquainted with their real views; that cupidity was their god, and gold their idol; to which every law, divine and human, was to be sacrificed, and to which end all the natives were to become victims. Gold was to be obtained at any price, no matter how many innocent lives were to be offered up to the attainment of it: that was no consideration to those diabolical Christians, whose thirst for wealth was never to be satiated; and whose hearts soon became callous to all the feelings of religion and humanity.

Nothing was thought of but enslaving the Indians, and driving them by thousands into the mines in search of gold; and the more those defenceless people brought them, the more was their avarice awakened, and the greater their incitement to tyrannize over them. The accounts that I have found among my dear departed friend's

papers, of the cruelties exercised over some caciques, in the province of Cuyo, to compel them to give an account of some supposed hidden treasure, would stagger all belief; and, were they not written by the hand of that righteous and good man, I should think it impossible for such beings to exist, or, at least, to be permitted by the Almighty to commit such infernal crimes, and live to return to Old Spain, glorying in their riches thus acquired, and receiving from their sovereign all the titles and honours that religious bigotry and vain-glory have to bestow.

O my friend, I am sick, heart-sick, when I think upon it; surely, in another world, there must be a place set apart for the reception of the souls of these more than fiends, where they will receive a punishment adequate to their crimes. The circumstance, as related by my revered friend, occurred but two and thirty years ago. Shame on the Spanish monarchy; is it not high time (to speak in the language of Scripture) “that the kingdom *should be taken from them and given to another?*” Such atrocities must cry aloud to Heaven for vengeance; and, sure I am, it will not be long before the most righteous vengeance will overtake them. I oftentimes thought, before I left Europe the last time, that Spain had long since attained her zenith, and was rapidly approaching to ruin and desolation. The French revolution, with all its sanguinary

horrors, has served to confirm my thoughts; and sure I am, that before the half of this century is expired, Old Spain will become a colony to this new world, or to some of the northern European powers, perhaps Russia. France will be parcelled out in the same manner. The Almighty will not always be trifled with, nor can the cruelties exercised on the wretched Protestants, by the sanguinary Alva, or the dreadful massacres of St. Bartholomew, be passed by, without a final retributive justice. I would fain pursue the inquiry, and enter more deeply into the present transactions of Europe; but I am cut off from all hope of receiving any information from thence, and, of course, can only indulge myself in theories and imaginary future prospects. But I cannot often help exclaiming to myself, Why sleeps the British lion—why do not my countrymen become the advocates of suffering millions, and the scourge of murder, rapine and plunder? With what transport should I receive the news, that a strong fleet and army of Britons was landed on these shores, to deliver the miserable from their chains, and the bitter yoke of slavery and oppression; to open the gates of liberty to millions.

I entertain a strong conviction that the Catholic faith will not be, many years longer, the established faith, either in the old or the new world; for, by the time that peace is once more restored to suffer-

ing Europe, and the destroying angel who is gone forth has finished his mission from the Most High, the minds of men will be enlightened, they will be able to reason on causes and effects; the pure light of reason will dawn upon their minds; and, by the inevitable intercourse of different nations with each other, during the conflicts of contending power, their ideas must be enlarged, and a liberality of sentiment will follow; the more wide and extended the warfare has been, the more liberal and kind will their sentiments of religion be; bigotry will be done away, and the plain and simple precepts of the Gospel become their only guide and director, that is to say, among those who possess any kind of religion at all; for there are certainly great numbers even on the European continent, who have not God before their eyes. I might truly say with the Scriptures, there is more hope of an infidel than of any of the Spaniards at present in this hemisphere. England appears to me as the nation on the face of the earth, where Christianity is practised with the greatest purity.

Yet it grieved me much, when I was last at home, to witness among the higher classes a general relaxation of principle, and an apparent indifference, at least, as to the genuine spirit of religion. But still I should hope that the innate goodness of every Briton's heart, would still preserve him

from French sophists and impious declaimers: for no nation can long stand, however powerful it may be, after impiety and irreligion are suffered to prevail. So reasoned my ever honoured friend; although a Catholic by profession, he was a Christian in word and in deed, literally such as the primitive Apostles were;—can I then do otherwise, knowing him as I did, than endeavour to follow his bright example, and look with abhorrence on the vices and conduct of the Spaniards; and earnestly pray that the Indians may find in Great Britain an emancipator from all their slavery: in which prayer I trust, my dear friend, you will most heartily join. Adieu!

LETTER II.

*Convent of St. Dominic, 1804.
Buenos Ayres.*

THE winter being too far advanced for me to hope to hear any thing from Father Pablo for some months to come, I am, as I told you I should be, wholly taken up in the perusal of my good friend's papers. Among them I have this morning found a minute and truly interesting account of the foundation of the Missions in Paraguay. The register was commenced by the first superior of this convent, and regularly continued by each of his successors; and every Father, who has been engaged in the Mission, has it in command from Rome, to have an exact copy of it, and to make an entry of all the particulars in which he himself has been engaged. 'Tis a voluminous work written in Latin, divided into as many sections as there are records, each of which is signed by the Father as a true and faithful relation of every circumstance therein set forth. After each account follows an approving declaration, first signed by the then Bishop, the superior of the convent, and four Brothers.

I shall endeavour, to the best of my abilities, to give you as concise an account of the whole as I possibly can ; and I think you will not only feel an interest in the fate of the Jesuits, but lament with me that they ever were expelled from hence. This I think must be the opinion of every one that considers all mankind as his Brethren ; and that those who dedicate their lives to the service of the Christian religion, and the propagation of its doctrines, must be considered with grateful regard, and, under certain circumstances, with unqualified wonder and admiration. They expose themselves to the most imminent dangers, despising hunger, cold, thirst, and wants of every kind ; bearing, with invincible patience, for months together, the scorching sun by day, and the cold and piercing dews of night, amid wild and trackless countries, where scarcely human foot had ever trod : not to mention the continual apprehensions of being devoured by wild beasts, or still more savage man ; for to be cruelly sacrificed, roasted and eaten by the ferocious Indian, has been uniformly the fate of the FIRST missionaries in the wilds of Paraguay.

If I recollect right, Cicero, in one of his most animated orations, speaks in the highest terms of panegyric of the wisdom, valour, and prudence of the first man, whose genius found out the means to collect and unite in the bonds of society hordes

of men, whose habitations were in woods, in caves of the rocks or dens of the earth, and taught them to know and feel the unspeakable blessings of social life.

What praise is not then due to those who have not only brought millions to a sense of their wretchedness; in regard to bodily comforts ; but taught them, that their immortal nature would be no less benefited by the exchange.

I am called upon by Father Jerome to attend the Bishop; and by the humane animation of his countenance, I am led to suppose some news is arrived. Adieu!

LETTER III.

MY FRIEND,

CAN you bring to your recollection that disagreeable affair I had with the *Duke de B—*, during the carnival at Rome; wherein his Eminence, *Cardinal de S—*, was involved. Now if ever I saw the Duke in my life, I have seen him this day at the Bishop's. As I was quitting the apartment in which I had been engaged with the prelate for near two hours, the door, on the opposite side of the room, was opened by the Major Domo, who conducted a gentleman, dressed in the Spanish habit, with three different orders appending to it. As I advanced, or rather passed him, he started, which made me regard him with more attention; his eye appeared to glance on my dress, when he slightly bowed and hastily addressed the Major Domo. I did not return his compliment, nor did my looks announce a recognition. I make not the least doubt but that he knew me, notwithstanding my ecclesiastical habit. You may be assured, that my being at the palace, and in apparent confidence with the Bishop, did

not impart to him the most pleasing sensations : however, let his motives for being here be what they may, he may rest contented I shall not disturb him, unless I am called upon by the Bishop to say, whether I know him or not ; in that case I shall not hesitate a moment, to declare all that I have experienced of his real character. I can nearly guess his errand ; and I trust the governor and the prelate will be cautious how they trust him.

I have not been much in company since my return, but to-night I shall be at Don Manuel's, when I hope to gain some intelligence. The French are most certainly spreading, with indefatigable industry, their diabolical creed on this continent. I have never been with any of the families whose intimacy I enjoy, but something has occurred in conversation to confirm my opinion ; and, notwithstanding all the care with which the good Bishop conversed, some words would escape him, by which I could gather that more was meant than met my ear. This convinces me more and more, of the absolute necessity of our nation taking a decided part, to prevent the French from ever gaining a firm footing here. Should that be the case, farewell to the liberty of Europe, and in fact to the whole world ; for nothing will set bounds to their ambitious projects. Could England be brought to espouse the cause of the poor

Indians, all might then be well in a very short time. The Indians of the numerous presidencies amount, it is supposed, to some millions, who would not only make good subjects but, brave soldiers, which the Spaniards have found to their cost; for to this moment they are obliged, even in their garrison towns, to be continually on their guard against the attacks of the roving tribes, that have sworn eternal enmity to the Spaniards: nor have even the mild and gentle influence of the Jesuits been able to induce them to adopt in any shape the comforts of civilization. Liberty pure and unrestrained is the god of their idolatry; to that idol they, one and all, of whatever nation, tribe or language, offer up their adoration, and to preserve which they will sacrifice life, and every tie that is dear to them on earth. They only want good officers to command them, whose ideas of liberty are in some measure conformable to their own; when no nation on the face of the earth would be able to withstand them; that is to say, those who may be brought to renounce their rambling life, to love the comforts of society; the blessing of religion; to be content with the country they possess; and to have only a defensive warfare. This is not idle speculation; it might with the greatest ease, be brought about in the course of twenty years at most, provided the plan of missionaries should be decidedly adopted at the

first, and uniformly acted upon ; but I do not think that even this would succeed with Spanish leaders: the English, and they only, would be the people to effect this great and important change. The Indians would have no fears of their being led into slavery, or deprived in any shape, of that liberty they so dearly value. I will for a moment suppose, that our government had gravely considered the present situation of so many suffering millions ; and had, in its wisdom, selected a certain number of able officers, humane, just and brave, devoid of avarice, scrupulously tenacious of their own and their country's honour, and determined to aid those oppressed people by every means in the power intrusted to them. Such a cohort of qualified commanders, bearing His Majesty's commission, properly equipped, and sent out to act in the name of their sovereign, could not fail to effect the most beneficial revolution that ever was brought about by the wise councils and judicious conduct of man. Secrecy to plan, promptitude to execute, energy and patience to effect whatever may be the desired object, has ever been, and still is, the grand outline by which the true Indian character is portrayed. Would not then a true British Officer glory in being at the head of an army, composed entirely of converted Indians, who would look up to their leader, as the vicergerent of God, and with one heart and one soul

strive who should be the foremost to execute his commands? By my friend's papers, I should suppose, there could not be less than a hundred and fifty or sixty thousand converted Indians in the province of Uruguay alone, attached and enrolled at the different presidencies of which Rioja Minor was one, but widely dispersed over an immense tract of country. From this account it may be inferred, what a vast army might be collected in a short time, to be united in one general cause, without any very great or unnecessary expense; for by the wise regulation of the Jesuit Fathers, every male Indian, from fifteen to fifty, in every presidency, was enrolled as regular militia; and, in order to make them well acquainted with military duty, the oldest and most experienced soldiers were appointed to instruct them in every minutia of European service, in order that they might be ready, whenever called upon either by the King of Spain's governor of the province, or to defend themselves against the sudden and frequent attacks of the roving Indians, to which the early establishment of every community has been constantly exposed. They will never cease attempting to destroy every infant settlement, till they find by experience the community is become too formidable for them; they then relinquish their hopes and set off in quest of others, for they never continue long in one place. Now we will suppose,

for argument's sake, that such a company of British Officers, could effect, by means of the trading Indians, a settlement on the banks of the Uruguay; or we will say, in the present posture of affairs in that province, at Rioja Minor, a few months would be sufficient to arrange every thing for a grand revolt; and taking every thing into consideration, what possible resistance, with any prospect of success, could even a force of ten thousand Spaniards make against an army, composed of an hundred thousand Indians, led on by Britons, dressed in the costume of the tribe which they immediately command, and determined on conquest or death.

But you may say, I do not take into the account the difficulty attending the march of such an army, and the means of subsisting it during a route of at least six hundred leagues; in which they would have to make their way through almost impenetrable woods, over many rapid and dangerous rivers, and the trackless plains of Las Pampas to be passed, before they could effect any considerable enterprise: all this, I grant you, would, in the opinion of an European, appear as insurmountable obstacles. An Indian is of a different character; he can never be brought to admit, that any possible difficulty can arise in the prosecution of any enterprise in which he is engaged. Apparent difficulties that would startle

and confound an European, would be considered by him as mere trifles. Those obstacles which might be considered as sufficient to terrify the bravest European soldier, and deter him from any attempt to overcome, he is taught from his infancy to surmount. The nature of a rambling mode of life, the eternal warfare the Indians are engaged in with each other, and the alternate ease and difficulty with which they procure every thing necessary to support and sustain life, render them in a great degree superior to every sense of danger, more especially when they apprehend their liberty is menaced. The Indians in community, and enrolled as military, in conformity to the first agreements entered into with the king of Spain, and the Procurator General of the missions, are obliged, whenever called upon by the governor of the province in which they are established, to send a certain number of men out of every hundred, properly armed, accoutred and provisioned, to aid the King's forces; and for which service, the poor Indian receives no other recompense, than the honour of serving his Majesty, and the non payment of his yearly tribute, of one or two piastres according as he is rated. He is obliged, during the whole of his service, to provide himself meat, drink, washing and lodging; it matters not how he procures it, that is a consideration too trivial for his Majesty, or his representative to

trouble themselves about ; 'tis sufficient for them, to have the Indian conceive it the highest honour to be called upon to expose himself to the most imminent dangers, and to be put on the forlorn hope upon every occasion. Does not this mode of procuring soldiers, for the service of His Most Catholic Majesty, argue a refinement in economy and a most Christian display of charity and benevolence?

Now, as what I have above told you is actually the case in all the different presidencies, do you not see with what facility and readiness an army can be moved from one province to another, more especially when called upon to act for themselves, under the directions of leaders they can look up to with respect and confidence, and whom they regard as their deliverers, and the avengers of their kind and beneficent pastors, of whom their perfidious task-masters have deprived them ; and whose memory, I am well assured will be for ever dear to them. No people under the face of heaven, can entertain a higher sense of gratitude than the poor Indian, or possess a more docile or gentle spirit. When once taught the relative duties of life and the practice of moral virtue, he will not only feel that they give peace and comfort here, but will ensure to him a happy immortality. In this opinion, I am sure you will accord with me. Adieu.

LETTER IV.

St. Jago, January 22, 1811.

It was the 24th of October before we left Buenos Ayres, till which time the passage of the Cordilleras is deemed impracticable. The journey from Buenos Ayres to St. Jago is altogether by land, and is performed in very large and high wheeled carts or waggons, drawn by oxen as far as Mendoza, the foot of the Cordillera, a mode of conveyance by no means disagreeable. The top is covered with hoops, on which are neatly spread cow hides, so closely connected, that not the most violent rain can penetrate; they have a door on each side, as also windows to give a free passage to the air; on the bottom are spread mattresses with pillows and coverlids, on which you may sleep with the greatest tranquillity. It is the custom to make the journey mostly by night, in order to avoid the scorching rays of the sun, which, on the plains of the Pampas, is in summer most intolerable: but the heat this year is thought to be by many degrees more intense than has been known for some years, and has caused a

more early season. We were two and twenty days in travelling from Buenos Ayres to the city of Mendoza, situated at the foot of the Cordilleras. We set off every afternoon about two, and sometimes three, hours before sun-set; and did not halt till about an hour after sun-rising. The general halting place is near some water, if, happily you chance to meet with any ponds or large puddles made by a sudden shower of rain, or the overflow of some river or brook, by the melting of the snow on the mountains, which is the only water you can expect to find in the space of three or four days' journey, and not unfrequently a week: for although there are several brooks and small rivers, yet they are so far distant from each other that you are obliged to carry water in carts made on purpose, not only for your own use but that of the cattle. Provision for the journey must also be provided; that is to say, bread made on purpose, composed of a mixture of maize and wheat, also wine and what fruit can possibly be taken; also wood to make your fire. For my own part, I felt very comfortable with my tea or coffee morning and evening, which at first none took but myself; but, in a few days, Don John and the Father Provincial became as much pleased with it as myself. We therefore most cordially took these meals together; and I am well persuaded that this refreshment alone was most effica-

cious in keeping the blood cool and temperate : and I would strongly recommend to every one crossing these plains to adopt the same simple beverage. The extreme heat causes most violent perspirations, which, in a few hours, exhaust the fluids, and occasions extreme thirst, which the water we have is not calculated to allay ; for the water taken with us from Buenos Ayres soon becomes unfit for use, notwithstanding all the care that can possibly be taken of it by keeping it covered with hides spread on reeds : indeed we were obliged, some days or rather nights, to prolong our journey for two or three hours, and sometimes more, in order to reach the banks of a river, by which we might halt for the convenience of filling the water-vessels, and to let the poor cattle have their fill, which were sometimes nearly stifled with heat and thirst. 'Tis surprising to see with what sagacity they will scent the water at a considerable distance, which is perceived by their throwing up their heads, snuffing the air and quickening their pace, so as to make it difficult for the negroes or Indians to keep up with them, in order to prevent their rushing into the water before they are unyoked ; a situation in which the cart I was in, sound asleep, had like to have been involved on the morning of the tenth day of our journey ; but it happily was prevented by the two negroes, belonging to Don John, who

had charge of two led horses that had set off together with some mules and Spanish oxen the moment they snuffed the water, when nothing could stop them. Happily for our company, this happened to be a river and tolerable good water, into which, but for the negroes' activity, my cart with Don John, the Father Provincial, and myself would have inevitably been plunged; for never were poor animals more exhausted, not having had any water for above thirty hours. Heaven only knows what would have been our fate altogether, had we not been directed to this most seasonable supply; and what added to the blessing was the refreshing air we inhaled from the aquatic shrubs and plants which bordered the stream. Here then we halted, and as soon as the awning was spread over the carts we set about our breakfast with an infinite deal of pleasure, which we took as near to the river as it was possible. We do not remain in the carts at the halting places, which would be to risk suffocation, but take our refreshment under the shade of a large covering made of manico leaves, laid over the top of each cart, and extended as far as possible on each side, by poles made of reed or a species of bamboo, which are strong but very light. This spot was by much the most agreeable of any that we fell in with for the space of seven hundred miles; and, in all that course, there is scarcely a tree or shrub to be met

with : it is one vast level plain, where nothing is to be seen, but here and there a flock or rather herd of wild guanacos, whose flesh is thought to be superior to venison. There are also beautiful large birds, and partridges in vast numbers, as also hares and wild cattle and horses, who reign supreme lords of these immeasurable wilds ; where there is nothing to impede the sight but one vast boundless horizon. The Spaniards might well term it the Escambradas, for the sun, at its rising, appears as if emerging from the earth and without rays till it is someway above the horizon. It is the same at its setting, for its beams disappear before the body of the sun is covered. After leaving the river, we journeyed on without any impediment for five days, when our water again began to fail ; as the excessive heat of the sun had dried up all the pools and little rivulets where it was usual to meet with water ; we were, therefore, obliged to make forced marches, in order to reach a small river we should have to cross ; but the oxen became soon too languid to proceed, and by that means we were obliged to halt in a spot where even the grass seemed to have been burnt to the very roots and nothing was presented to the eye but barrenness and desolation. We had yet a long journey to make before we could hope for any relief. We had but one small jar of water left, and our thirst seemed to increase every mo-

ment, and we did not doubt but the cattle felt a thirst equal to our own. My sensations in that hour, were such as I never felt before. I am now persuaded that water might easily have been obtained, had we thought of digging a few feet only in the plain near to some withered aquatic plants that I saw, in great quantities, about ten feet from us, and which I afterward recollected grew in the convent garden and several places about Buenos Ayres. This naturally pointed out a latent spring, but at this moment, my intellects must assuredly have been most strangely affected, nay absolutely stupefied, for I could think of nothing. However, as soon as my recollection returned, which was not till it could be of no service, I strongly recommended to the officer or chief conductor of the waggons, on his return, to take from Mendoza, a pickaxe and shovel, and not to fail halting on the spot and to dig to the depth of about three or four feet, when there might be every reasonable expectation of finding a spring. I would recommend to every one passing from Cuyo to Buenos Ayres, or from the latter to Cuyo, never to leave it without taking in the water-cart a pickaxe and shovel, as very little labour would be required to obtain water in the like extremity in numberless places along the Pampas, which any one, possessing but a very trifling knowledge of aquatic plants, would very

readily discover. We had been in this unpleasant situation for near four hours ; the negroes were sent in different directions to see how far the scorched grass extended, and were at a considerable distance, when the Father Provincial cried out, " Look at the oxen, they smell water : " we all eagerly turned to the poor panting animals, and saw them stretch out their necks and raise their heads towards the west, and snuff the air in a manner as if they would be certain of obtaining drink could they but raise themselves in the air. At that moment not a cloud or a single breath of air was to be seen or felt : but in a few minutes the cattle began to move about as if mad, or possessed by some invisible spirit, snuffing the air with most violent eagerness and gathering closer and closer to each other ; and before we could form any rational conjecture as to what could occasion their simultaneous motion, the most tremendous storm came on of thunder, lightning, and rain, I ever witnessed in my life. The rain fell in perpendicular streams as if all the fountains of heaven were suddenly broke loose ; so that, in the space of a very few minutes, torrents of water rolled around us, and the cattle easily drank their fill at the spot on which they stood. The thunder did not in the least affect them : wholly regardless of the warring elements, they drank on, as did our poor famished

attendants, who soon satisfied their thirst, in a most curious and unexpected manner, by laying down on their backs and opening their mouths, as wide as possible, to let the rain descend to their stomachs with the same rapidity as it fell. How they escaped choaking I have yet to learn, for surely there never was such a singular expedient. They then set about filling the water-carts, whilst my companions and myself could think of nothing; but absolutely stood like statues, not even endeavouring to dip up a cup of water to quench our thirst. We must certainly have been what the vulgar in England call thunder-struck, or something like it; for the thunder was most awful, and such as I had never heard or could possibly conceive.

The storm lasted about twenty minutes, and caused the most wonderful change in the face of nature that I believe was ever witnessed. Its departure was as sudden as its approach, and, in a few minutes, the face of the heavens was bright and clear as if not a single drop of rain had fallen. This very sudden change in the atmosphere seemed to regenerate every thing around us. The parched earth seemed to be renovated with verdure, and both man and beast appeared to have received new animation.

We pursued our journey without any inconvenience for four days, when we fell in with a cara-

van of Cuyan merchants going to Buenos Ayres, laden with Cuyan wine, curious and beautiful baskets, made of grass of divers colours, and cups and vases of every different form imaginable, and so delicately and closely wove that they will retain any kind of liquid ; and, on account of their lightness and beauty, they are used as glasses and cups, and every domestic vessel of the sideboard. They had likewise some curious furs, ostrich feathers of a most surprising length and plumage ; also some Indian armour, such as back and breast plates, helmets, and cuirasses made of leather, remarkably light, but at the same time impenetrable either to shot or weapons, so that nothing can pierce them. Don John assured us this was the case, as he himself had experienced it more than once.

About three years before, on his march from Buenos Ayres to Santa Fé, his company was suddenly attacked by a party of roving Indians, whom they had great difficulty to drive back into the woods ; nor did they effect it till he had lost seven men killed and eighteen wounded. After the affair was over, they happily reached a Spanish farm, to which they bore the wounded men, but too late to save more than five of them, for upon examining the wounds they found the Indians had made use of darts and arrows headed with human bone, and it being at that time in the

middle of summer, a gangrene of the wounds had taken place; and so very subtle was the poison that death came on in a very few hours.

Every one was astonished that Don John had not fallen, for at the first onset, he could not have escaped the arrows aimed at him, had not this Indian armour preserved him; for the marks of forty-six arrows appeared on his helmet, breast, and shoulders, not one of which had penetrated more than the sixteenth part of an inch. He had been in many skirmishes with different nations, but never fell in with any so wild and ferocious as these. The armour had been given him by a friendly cacique, but he was a stranger to the method adopted by the Indians to make the leather thus invulnerable. He had only heard it was done when the hides were green, and that by placing the hide in a trough of warm water, as soon as it is taken from the animal, in which three different kinds of gums had been dissolved, all three of a very pungent nature: in this infusion the hide lays for about twelve or fourteen hours; it is then taken out and cut into different pieces according to the size of the object meant to be formed; each part is then fixed in a mould made of earth baked in the sun, of the most exact dimensions of a breast-plate, helmet, &c. As soon as it is nicely fitted, and deemed correct in all its proportions, it is left to the air for about



an hour ; it is then rubbed well over with a thick aromatic oil, which is repeated as long as any absorption is observed : before it is taken out of the mould it is well rubbed with a smooth round flint about three inches long and two wide, having one sharp point. This rubbing is continued as long as the least dampness appears on the surface ; it is then taken out and placed in the air, but out of the sun, till it is become as hard as steel. Don John said he had never seen any of these to be sold before, as he had been given to understand, that the nations would not part with any to a Spaniard. Whatever nation it may be, the ingenuity with which they are made, and the neat style in which they are finished, argues a capacity that would, with very little trouble, display as fine a genius as any of those of Greece or Rome, in any thing that pertains to war : not but that the fine arts, I am persuaded, would as readily spring up and flourish, as those of war under experienced masters. Adieu.

LETTER V.

AFTER we had parted from the merchants, we journeyed on, and had to encounter several most dreadful storms of thunder and lightning, but no more rain till we reached Mendoza, where we had been but a few hours, when another such a storm, as that we experienced on the plains, came on and as soon departed. We had not arrived here above two hours, before the whole of our caravan came in, and happy indeed I was to find they were all safe. Although I was by this time become familiarized to the thunder, yet I could not divest myself of the idea but that some or other would be killed by it; happily however, no one received the smallest hurt.

This city is situated about three or four miles from the foot of the Cordilleras; and here the arrangements are made for the route over these tremendous mountains, which takes up eight or ten days to accomplish. The church and public buildings are all very good, as in most of the Spanish towns: those of the inhabitants are but sorry low huts, or houses not more than one story, built of various materials, such as first

comes to hand, and scattered here and there, without order or regularity; each having a garden attached to it, in which the inhabitants for the most part sleep in a kind of hammock, made of net-work very strong and neat: these are either slung to trees or poles, fixed occasionally in the ground to move at pleasure. A mattress, stuffed with cotton, a pillow and a thin coverlid, composes the whole apparatus of a bed, that is to say, during summer, when it is almost impossible to sleep in the house, for the heat and the bugs, which swarm here in abundance, notwithstanding the cold of winter, which I should have supposed from its severity would destroy that detestable vermin.

The native Indians of this province are much taller and thinner than any I have hitherto seen, and of a much darker hue; but this might arise from the paint they lay on their faces, which is, I am told, not confined to red, white or black, but the women make use of even green, when they are most dressed. At their feasts and dances, their dress is very neat, composed of a long shift of cotton, in general without sleeves, fastened round the waist with a broad band of different coloured wool or cotton. They wear a kind of sandal on the feet, composed of wove grass with narrow bands, like ribbon, crossing each other on the leg about three inches above the ankle: these

sandals have a pretty, cool look, and are most admirably adapted to the country. The women let their hair grow to a great length, which they sometimes tie in a large knot on the top of their heads, round which they place a chaplet of feathers of the most beautiful colours, beads, or any little ornament they may chance to have: they know not the use of either the cap or bonnet: these articles would, with them, be a miserable encumbrance. The men's dress is something similar to that of the women. They are considered as much less warlike than those of the neighbouring states; but they possess good understandings, an aptness to learn, and know how to blend patience with activity. The country produces every comfort requisite to life; their wine and oil is thought superior to that of most other countries, and their gardens produce every kind of fruit and vegetable. Their bread is of a superior kind, and they want nothing but an incitement to industry, cleanliness and order, to make good and most desirable subjects. Adieu.

LETTER VI.

WE are lodged at the Convent of the Holy Trinity; a late foundation, but richly endowed by a Spaniard, born at Mendoza, who had amassed immense wealth, without heirs to inherit it; he has therefore made the church his heir, and most plentifully provided for the society, who indeed live in conventual splendour. Three of the Fathers are, at present, at Rome, and for whose return the society appear to be extremely solicitous. Don John to-day held a long conversation over the dessert with the superior, relative to the present state of the church in Europe, which the Father apprehended to be in a very perilous condition; but concluded the discourse by drinking off a large bumper of *Lachryma Christi*; congratulating the society on their being so very amply provided for, that let his Holiness stand or fall they would not be affected by it: they should therefore endeavour to enjoy the good things of this life whilst they were able; and impart their happiness to as many, as it might please Providence to send in their way. This was the first bon vivant I had met with in America; he is

a most jolly soul, totally void of hypocrisy, and I make no doubt he lives up to his profession; but I must observe that this order does not enjoin abstinence in any shape; we may therefore readily guess, what accommodating ladies they meet with in the female societies under their care, which are two, and, I am assured, are well filled, which seems to be much the fashion in all the cities of this country. There are I believe but few penances enjoined: they all seem to be very lax in their morals, and not under much fear of censure. At Buenos Ayres I had many opportunities of noticing it; and here, as I understand, it is much the same. The Father Provincial has an affair already upon his hands, which he made not the least scruple to avow to me this morning; and this is all these modern holy and infallible sons of the church appear to trouble their heads about: the external ceremonies are hurried over with a carelessness and inattention that more than shocks me: I cannot bear to see the service of God treated with levity or inattention of any kind. Let a man be of whatever sect he may, so he address his God with respect and reverence, sincerely believing what he professes to be acceptable to God, that man may in my opinion be deemed a good Christian.

Can we wonder then at the general dissoluteness of the clergy in these remote climes, or set too high a value on the missionaries, whose whole

care was to preserve their religion pure and uncontaminated, in all the simplicity of the primitive Christians. It was their anxiety for the salvation of souls, and declared abhorrence of those vices committed by the generality of the catholic clergy, that raised them up such a swarm of enemies, who finally effected their expulsion from this country, which the Spanish monarchy will have cause very shortly most sadly to lament. Such a general depravity of morals, among the clergy, must inevitably sap the foundation of every moral virtue in society at large, and then universal anarchy and confusion must ensue; for when the barriers of rectitude and good faith are broken down by those who should be the firmest supporters of it, farewell to every thing that is sacred to man: every tie is then dissolved, and man, unrestrained by either religion or morality, becomes in a short time more brutal than the wild beast of the forest.

To avoid holding in utter detestation the whole of the clergy, I think on Father Hernandez, and am again, in some measure, reconciled to them; in the hope that, among the many, I may meet with some few possessing his virtues. Adieu.

LETTER VII.

AFTER a fortnight's stay at **Mendoça**, we left the hospitable mansion of the Holy Trinity, to commence our journey over the Cordilleras, the whole of our company mounted on mules. I was not at all sorry to leave **Mendoça**, being anxious to breathe a purer air. The great heat of the sun, the fogs, the density of the air, and the barrenness of the prospect, all conspired to make me melancholy; every unpleasant circumstance of my life crowded on my reflection; nothing seemed to occur but to afflict me. The pleasures of the table, the flashes of wit and good humour that attended our repasts, had no charms for me; and although my stay here was so very short, yet, in that little time, I had nearly become a misanthrope. I had no **Father Hernandez**, no **Brother Jerome** to communicate with; no natural scenes for my inquiring eye to rush upon; no plants or trees to demand attention and investigate their properties; all seemed one entire blank: for two days only out of the fourteen I was roused from this inertia

by one of the Fathers, who seemed to possess some little respect for the works of nature, and who kindly answered all my questions as to the Indians of the province, their trade and produce; and if they had any works of art or nature to make me acquainted with.—As to works of art, he said, we are still in the cradle; but I think I can take you to one of nature, which will assuredly excite your utmost admiration. He thus explained his object: the river *Mendoza*, from which the city receives its name, takes its rise in the Eastern part of the Cordilleras, from which it descends, increasing, as it falls, by many small rivalets; and the rapidity with which it descends, has enabled it to force a passage of about sixteen feet wide, through a mountain of chalk, making a sort of arched cave, the roof of which forms a bridge of nearly the same breadth as the aperture: immediately under the bridge, at about twenty feet from the top of the arch, upon an horizontal plane, out of a smooth rock, rise five different fountains of extreme hot water, possessing many medicinal virtues: the water is thrown up as high as the top of the arch, when, as it falls, it mingles with the river, from which the moment before it had seemed to rise. The combat of those opposite waters on the humidity of the air above, produces the most beautiful crystallizations, in almost every kind of figure the imagination can

possibly conceive: from between the larger objects are continually falling drops as big as hazel nuts, which, resting on the bed of rock below, presently become petrified, and present to the eye one of the most extraordinary pictures that nature in all her varieties, has, perhaps, been known to display to the eye of the painter, or to reward the researches of the natural philosopher.

Some of them are in the shape of pyramids, with points, as if cut by the hand of the most skilful lapidary, and of the purest white; close to it shall be another of a different shape, and composed of as many different colours as the rainbow; others immediately at or round the mouth of the fountains, look like large masses of the purest emerald. I stood for some moments silent and motionless with astonishment, struck with awe and reverence at the scene before me.

The Father expressed his satisfaction, at having made me acquainted with this most sublime work of nature: but, said he, this is only the commencement of those natural wonders, which await you in your passage over these mountains: you will find the works of the Creator multiply as you advance, but not, in any particular degree till you reach the western side; there nature is displayed in all her varied pomp and magnificence:

there nothing is wanting to impart pleasure and delight to man : there she has scattered, with the most bounteous prodigality, every blessing that can in any wise contribute to the comfort and solace of life. There, Brother Mathias, will you be happy, for you appear to discriminate correctly and know how to value the works of God. For me the die is cast; I am fated to continue in my present state till recollection shall be no more ; and then!—as the good Father said this, he covered his face with his robe and turned from me.

His words, his manner, and his action, all surprised me; and I stood contemplating his particular, but interesting appearance. He awoke, suddenly as it were, from his reverie, and proposed our return to the convent, as I must suffer some inconvenience by staying longer on the banks of the river.

The Father saw I was surprised at what he had said, and appeared at times as if he was inclined to renew the conversation, but as often checked himself. Just before we entered the convent, he turned round and asked me, if I would take charge of a letter to a friend of his at St. Jago, which I must undertake to deliver without the knowledge of a second person. I readily assured him of my willingness to do that, or any thing else that might

be in my power. This assurance, on my part, immediately gave to his countenance a tranquillity that I had not observed before, and we passed several hours that evening in general, but very pleasing, conversation. At my going to rest I found a note on my pillow, which informed me that Father Savodro would thank me if I would accompany him early in the morning to the presidency of St. Ruloma, about a league from the town; and he would be ready for me an hour before sun-rise, in the Refectory Garden, as he had something to show me that would excuse his proposal. My expectations were awakened on the occasion, as I thought there was something more than a natural curiosity to be unfolded to me; and I could not but imagine, that something relative to his situation in the convent, was the real reason for desiring me to accompany him.

I had observed from my first introduction to him, that, though surrounded with every earthly comfort, he seemed not to enjoy them: but, even at table, appeared frequently abstracted, and as if his thoughts were wandering to some far distant object; neither mirth nor wine seemed to have any pleasure for him; and he would frequently retire to his room, when every one else was fully enjoying the good things before them, without taking thought of the morrow. I had attributed this

conduct to a stern disposition, which is inherent in some constitutions. In this, however, I was much deceived: he was truly unhappy, and by such a suspicion I did him great injustice, for which I have since sought to make every possible atonement.

LETTER VII.

St. Jago.

WE were ten days passing the Cordilleras ; the first five were the most unpleasant I ever remember. Almost immediately on leaving the city we began to ascend, in slow and solemn order, one by one, it being impossible to move two abreast unless in the little valleys which seem to have been scattered here and there, to serve as resting-places for the adventurous traveller ; and but for these, it would, in my opinion, be utterly impossible to effect a passage over mountains piled on mountains, with only narrow paths just wide enough for a single mule to make good its steps, and so extremely steep and slippery by the rushing of numberless streams, from one precipice to another, that the secure step of the mules, (especially when they had to cross deep and wide rivulets, rushing with the impetuosity of the most agitated mill-streams and bearing down all before them,) is a natural subject of admiration and astonishment. Indeed, on the second day of our advance, one of these streams upset a mule, laden

with provisions, that had been sent in advance to gain a small valley where we were to halt for the night. The animal was saved from inevitable destruction by being caught between two pieces of rock against which the torrent had driven him.

In some parts of our journey we had to pass, for several leagues over a rugged narrow path, continually intersected by streams occasioned by the melting of the snow in the more lofty parts of the mountains. On the eastern side, in our passage from Cuyo to Chili, we were constantly involved in clouds, with frequent storms of thunder and lightning, more tremendous than imagination can conceive, and this weather continued till we were within five leagues of the summit of the pass; when the air becomes rarefied and the dense vapours disperse. The cold at the same time begins to pierce through every limb, and compels the traveller to have recourse to furred cloaks and caps, with which we were provided; but should it be my lot again to cross to Cuyo, I would have a complete dress made of wool in the fleece, to set close to the body, and wear it underneath my linen, so that the limbs would be more at liberty than with a cloak, which after all, is heavy and inconvenient.

The change from almost suffocating heat to piercing cold made me conclude we could not be far off the mid region of the air; for upon look-

ing up to notice the distance between such as were below and those which had nearly reached the summit, and who appeared to be, as Shakespeare says, no bigger than a crow, my breath became so exceedingly rarefied, that I was fain to place my hand hastily on my mouth in order to preserve the requisite temperature of the heart, and which I was obliged to continue repeating for some time after I had gained the summit, and also for a considerable way on the descent; but the prospect I enjoyed when I had gained the plain, more than repaid me for all the difficulties I had encountered in my ascent.

I could not but imagine that I was transported to some region, so far removed above the residence of man, that no evils incident to mortals could possibly reach me more. Above, nothing was to be seen but the wide concave of heaven, in the midst of which the sun shone in most resplendent majesty; not a single cloud or vapour was to be seen: there was nothing but calmness, serenity, and peace. The earth was hid from our sight by tempestuous clouds resting in the lower region of the air, and discharging their angry vapours on the earth below. Whilst I stood contemplating the scene, my mind expanded, and my spirit seemed to struggle for emancipation from the body, that it might take its flight to still higher regions, and be instantly free from all the cares

and sorrows that harrow up the soul of man ; but I was soon roused from this dream of seraphic liberty by the order for the caravan to proceed. We therefore immediately began to descend, and as we approached the first valley where we were to halt for the night, we were surprised at the sound of voices and the tinkling of the muleteer's bell ; as we proceeded we found it to be a military party going from St. Jago to Buenos Ayres. These I could presently divine to be only the forerunner, or to speak more properly, the advanced guard of a much greater number, sent thither to replace those that had a short time before our departure, taken the route for the Uruguay. There were only ninety-five privates, and seven officers, all but one quite young men, who had been but a very few weeks arrived at St. Jago from Old Spain. The men who did not appear to be much acquainted with military duty, were all very indifferently armed and accoutred.

Their officers seemed to be gay sprightly youths, at full liberty to say and do whatever they thought proper. One of them I am certain was a Frenchman, and he appeared to have the command : his air and manner was perfectly French ; he spoke good Spanish, but with a French accent, and was the best dressed ; although his costume was correctly that of a Spaniard, yet Buonaparte's style was visible throughout.

So you may readily conclude what the French are about here, and it serves to confirm the conjecture I had formed as to the probable business of the Duke de B——, should it be permitted to succeed. Alas! the poor Indians, they will only change the tiger for the hyena. On seeing those men my thoughts involuntarily reverted to the scenes at Rioja, and I much regretted I had not stayed among the sons of liberty.

We halted in this valley fourteen hours longer than was intended, on hearing from the soldiers that a river which we had to cross, about four leagues from thence, was so much swollen as to cause the loss of three mules and one man: it was therefore thought advisable by our company to remain where we then were, till the force of the current was abated, which would be by the next morning. The meeting of two caravans in the mountains is so extremely rare that the chief muleteer said he had never heard of such a circumstance but once, and that was about eight years ago, when some disturbances took place at Cordova, but of which he never knew the result.

The soldiers left us early the next morning. Don John did not appear to be well pleased with something the commanding officer said at parting. He remained thoughtful and perplexed during the remainder of our journey; I was not near him at the time, therefore could form no probable

conjecture as to the subject. I cannot but think that something is in agitation of a very particular nature, else why is this grand council of the Indies to be assembled at St. Jago in such a private manner ; and why are there so many French in Chili as I have heard there are : and those whose names with which I have been made acquainted, I well know to be some of the most restless, factious, and intriguing spirits that ever cursed a nation ; and, if the Spaniards in this hemisphere are not more firm in their principles, or more powerful than some with whom I have been acquainted, the French will soon obtain the sole government of both kingdoms, and then must follow the subjugation of the universe: for nothing but the ALMIGHTY can arrest the progress, or overthrow the designs, of this so much boasted Emperor of the French. He appears to me, an instrument in the hands of God to chastise a sinful world ; and to show to the sovereigns of it, how weak and how futile is all their power and greatness, when the protecting hand of Heaven is withdrawn from them, and they are left to know and feel that there is a POWER which can, in a moment, shake to its foundation the throne of the proudest potentate, and shew them that an honest and good man, however low his state, is more highly valued, and more acceptable to the great Creator, than the tyrant who boasts that all mankind are but his slaves.

O how I wish at this moment to know what is transacting in Europe! surely some great event is at hand, or perhaps has already occurred. Had we kept Buenos Ayres when it was in our possession, millions would have been now alive to bless us who have since been sacrificed to a weak infatuated policy. But I still hope that Great Britain will in the end become the arbiter of the fate of those more than wretched Indians, who are, in the great scale of nature, of equal weight with the most enlightened nations of the earth. I have been now so many years in this hemisphere, have seen so many different tribes, and have so minutely studied their natures, both in their savage and civilized state, that I almost at times imagine I am one of their race: nor do I think myself lowered by the supposition: but I dare not avow these sentiments to those with whom I remain a captive. Indeed, I know not where I am straying; you see my rambling thoughts are ever on the wing, you will therefore make allowances for one who is over anxious for the fate of the oppressed. Adieu.

LETTER VIII.

THE descent on the western side of the mountains, though not less difficult, is far more pleasant; the resting places more frequently occur. Unattended with fogs, thunder, or lightning, now and then some heavy clouds would pour down upon us in the valleys, which, for a short time, made it appear as if we were borne along upon them; and the meteors, engendered by their denseness, would hiss about in all directions, cracking and darting like so many squibs or crackers. These visitors the mules did not seem to relish; two of them got one evening between Don John's mule and the Father Provincial's, and so frightened the animals, that both gentlemen were quickly unmuled, but, very fortunately, received no hurt of any consequence. It was fortunate, indeed, that we did not meet with them when passing the narrow steeps; in that case inevitable death must have been the lot of both mules and riders, for we had but an hour before passed down a path, which but to think on fills the mind with the most uncontrolled horror. For my part, I shut my eyes and committed my-

self entirely to the protection of Providence, and the poor trembling mule who was as sensible of the danger as myself. Picture to yourself a path about a foot wide, broken and disjointed by the force of descending currents, whose rapidity is such as to baffle all description, for it is impossible for the eye to look at them for a moment without being giddy. On the right hand a wall of rugged rocks, with ever and anon projecting pieces, which if the traveller should chance to strike against, both man and beast must embrace instant death, by being hurried headlong over a precipice of horrid rocks, into a deep and rapid river rolling at the bottom, and rushing on with such indescribable impetuosity, as to startle and confound the most resolute and determined mind. I, therefore, thought it most advisable not to keep my eye upon the surrounding dangers: and thus I proceeded without any incident worthy of notice.

We now came to a valley of about a mile and a half in diameter, surrounded on all sides by stupendous rocks, forming altogether an enchanting amphitheatre. On entering it, the eye is struck with the view of a scene that beggars all description: an evergreen plain so delightfully intermixed with odoriferous plants, shrubs, and flowers, that we might have fancied our arrival in a Mahometan paradise. In the centre of this

fairly land rises several fountains, which threw their water into the air to a surprising height, when they formed by their fall a thousand meandering streams, which, after repeated windings and turnings, united in one stream pouring into a large river about half a mile distant. This delightful scenery occupied all my thoughts for some time, even after I had reached St. Jago, for I had taken up and brought safely with me four most beautiful shrubs, such as I had never seen before, and all of them in full bloom.

The stem of one is about twenty inches in height, and about one inch in diameter, the bark of which is so exactly coloured, and marked with circles like the back of the rattle-snake, that, at first sight, I actually thought it a young one, raised itself up to dart at some object among the flowers, and had absolutely advanced to kill it; when I was surprised to find myself most agreeably deceived. It has neither branches or leaves, but on the top, where it sends forth one large bud; that, in three or four days, bursts, and presents to the eye about ten or twelve leaves, exactly resembling, in shape, form, and texture, a plume of ostrich feathers of a pomona green colour, tipped at the edge with a dark brown: from between every two leaves springs a cluster of flowers, green, white, and pink, in form and shape like the everlasting pea: each cluster con-

taining from twenty to thirty flowers, rising about three inches above the leaves, when it gently bends downwards and forms altogether one of the most beautiful coronets that art or nature ever produced, and emitting at the same time a very strong scent resembling amber. I doubt that it was from this flower the Indian caciques caught the idea of forming those elegant feather ornaments, which the chiefs wear on their heads at their festivals and processions, and pleased me so much at Buenos Ayres. Another is a very low plant, in shape and size like a hen's egg, having a very delicate fibrous root; it is wholly covered with leaves and flowers that spring out of the egg, and rise about two inches: the leaves are dark green on the upper side, and most pure white below. From the root of every leaf springs three flowers in the form of a star, of the colour of peach blossom, and each flower is about half an inch in diameter: the eye of each strongly resembles a polyanthus, while the scent lays not in the flower but in the leaves, which, when agitated by the air, seems to perspire a kind of gum that adheres to the touch: its scent is very powerful, but sweet like lavender.

The third plant is, properly speaking, a flowering stick, for which reason I have given it the name of Aaron's Rod. That which I have is about two feet long, correctly round, hollow like a

tube; the surface is a very light green, sprinkled with spots of deep yellow: it is covered with flowers in shape and colour like apple blossoms; has very little smell, and the flowers continue only about fourteen or sixteen days, when they drop off without any apparent decay, and are succeeded by a green knob about the size of a pepper corn. For the first eight days it remains green, then changes to a deep yellow, and lastly black, when it falls off and is almost immediately succeeded by a flower: and this, I am told, is its unvarying course, till it reaches about six feet in height, when it suddenly decays. They are reproduced by the seed contained in the berry, which when opened discloses a small husk about the size of rape seed; though if sown in pots it does not produce so strong a plant as those which spring from self-sown seed. The last is a shrub of most rare medicinal virtues: it possesses, I am told, all the valuable properties of the celebrated bezoar stone, once so highly extolled as an antidote against all poisons and malignant fevers. The plant I have is very young, not above a foot in height, therefore I cannot as yet prove its virtues: the nearest that resembles it among our English shrubs is rue, and its scent is not unlike it, only much more powerful: the leaves are very bitter, and the juice a violent astringent. It is not common for it to flower more than once a year,

when it is nearly covered with flowers in shape of small trumpets of a light blue and yellow. I am highly pleased with my acquisition, and hope I shall at some future period be able to send them to you.

There is a great variety of most beautiful flowers scattered over all the little plains and valleys that are crossed in the descent on the western side of the Andes or Cordilleras, as also a great number of aromatic plants, which to a skilful botanist would afford the highest gratification. For my own part I could most willingly have taken up my abode in this valley of sweets and silence from whence I bore away the plants, being certain of finding a never-ending variety in these delightful walks of nature, where the sublime and beautiful meet the eye in every direction: and where the works of the great Creator must call forth all our gratitude and praise, to find amidst the most terrifying scenes of natural horrors such a tranquil seat of nature.

There cannot be a more striking emblem of life than the passage of the Cordilleras. The vast and immeasurable plains you have to pass before you begin to ascend the mountain, we will suppose to be the state of infancy, for through the whole of it we are obliged to be conducted and supported by a guide. From the moment we begin to ascend the mountain, to that of gaining the summit, I consider as the years spent from

youth to manhood. Here we are glad to rest for a short time, which, when we have enjoyed, we begin to descend. Now this I argue, from the moment we begin this arduous journey on the eastern side to the period we gain the top, we meet with nothing but impediments, difficulties, and danger : all appears as if we were altogether engaged in fatigue, tumult, and disorder. Every element seems determined to oppose your passage, and threaten you with inevitable destruction if you persevere. Such is what man meets with on his entrance into life. But if he places his confidence in the Divine protection, he gains at length the summit in safety, and pursues the remainder of his journey with confidence, and the hope of surmounting every remaining danger. At length he attains in the delightful valley the full consummation of all his wishes. Such, my friend, were my fanciful ideas as I stood musing in the valley.

The passage over the mountains is computed to be forty leagues from the commencement of its base on either side. It used to be considered as wholly impossible to make this journey in winter ; but there have been many instances lately of Indians having performed it even in the most inclement season, and also in far less time. The winter sets in about the middle of May, when the snow commences falling, and entirely envelopes

the whole of this vast chain, as if with a garment of celestial whiteness; and although there are not less than fifteen to twenty volcanos dispersed among them, the snow never wholly disappears, but remains even in the hottest summers, as a blessing to the earth by refreshing the valleys with cold breezes, and at the same time pouring down innumerable streams and rivers, which in many places overflow their banks, and, like the treasures of the Nile, fertilize and enrich the earth. These great blessings, added to the advantage Chili possesses of being constantly refreshed by the sea breezes, renders this kingdom more temperate and congenial to Europeans, than any other of this vast continent. But being as it were the termination of the Spanish discoveries, it has not been so well known and appreciated as either of the others. Adieu.

LETTER IX.

St. Jago, Convent of St. Francis.

I HAD the happiness on my arrival here to find our good Superior in health, but not tranquil ; the account I gave him of what occurred at ———, the death of my ever lamented friend, and the relation of what passed between the governor and him. Father Pablo burst into tears, and severely accused himself as being, in some measure, the cause of his death, by leaving him exposed to dangers that he apprehended at the time he left him ; but he had no idea that matters would have been carried to such extremes. The worthy man enjoined me to silence, and to continue my character of a novice, and by no means to make any one acquainted with my being an Englishman ; but to let those with whom I should associate consider me as a French gentleman, who had sought refuge in the church from the anarchy in Europe. Such an opinion, he said, would be readily received, as a vast many had already sought and found a secure asylum in Chili, and he did not doubt but I should meet

with many at St. Jago. He left me at perfect liberty to make what arrangements I thought proper in respect to any intercourse I might have with any of that nation.

Father Pablo purposes to remain here till an expected bull from Rome arrives, but of what nature I cannot learn : it has been long promised, and very earnestly desired by the bishop of this diocese, who has it seems in this hemisphere as many prerogatives as his holiness. God knows how they will come on, but if I guess right, the holy father's infallibility is become, even here, a matter of dispute, and in consequence his throne will not long remain more steady than his neighbours; but every thing you know must have an end, great as well as small: all must submit to its appointed time. I shall venture to prognosticate before twenty years are elapsed, that there will either be in this country no religion at all, or it will be that of the protestants. The former will be the case should the French obtain the ascendancy, and the latter if the Britons, which God of his infinite mercy grant; for notwithstanding the present victorious arms of the great nation and their invincible chief, I cannot help promising myself that Britain will, in some way or other, arrest his career, and prevent his overturning this southern world, as he has done with your neighbours. You know not how earnestly I wish to obtain a parole

of six months, that I might hasten to home, and there point out the necessity of England taking an active part here, to prevent those threatened evils which I but too plainly see hover over the poor natives. As to the Spaniards, they are too dissolute and abandoned, as well as too generally attached to the French, to fear or care for any thing about them. I would most readily give a thousand piastres to any one who would inform me how matters are likely to terminate on your side of the great waters. Adieu.

LETTER X.

Convent of St. Francis.

To speak in Sterne's phrase, I should say that the convent from which I date this letter, and, in which I am to reside during our stay in Chili, is, without exception, the greatest, the grandest, the fairest, and fullest, and richest of all the pious edifices at St. Jago. The boasted grand Charreusse in your part of the world, is but a poor subaltern, when put in comparison with (this which is a well peopled town within itself. The gardens are immense, and I think, may boast the produce of every clime on earth.

In this delightful spot I range at will, having been well received by the community, and in particular by the superior. My time is much my own, being considered more as an ecclesiastical aide-de-camp to Father Pablo, than a novice on the establishment. From the indulgencies granted me of going and coming as I please, I am induced to think the bishop and the superior have been made acquainted with my story, and, from thence, suppose me worthy of their confidence. The church

of this convent is of free-stone, in a bold style of architecture ; the steeple is considerably higher than any other in the city, and so admirably situated, that it serves as a point to direct the traveller at the distance of several leagues. This steeple was the first object which caught my attention on approaching St. Jago; and, were I an adept at description, which unfortunately I am not, I should endeavour to describe its architectural merits ; I can therefore only say, that it is composed of three different divisions, each of a different order, Grecian, Roman, and Egyptian: round each are well wrought balustrades, from whence most enchanting prospects may be seen. The Egyptian order, in the form of a pyramid, forms the highest point. The street, in which the church and convent stand, is of great breadth. It is termed Cannada, runs north and south more than the whole length of the city, and has a foot-way as with us: one side is planted with trees, that serve as an embankment to a small branch of the river Mapocha, which is let on in various directions to water the streets and gardens, by which means the city is clean and cool ; for by turning on the water, which I am told is done every day in summer, all kind of filth is sent off and empties itself into the great river some way below the city. Thus the inhabitants are enabled to enjoy the most refreshing coldness even in the

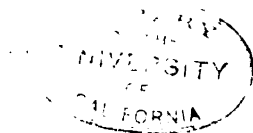
hottest part of the day ; and, in the evening, the streets are crowded at the doors with men, women, and children, all enjoying themselves, dressed out in all their finery, in which they display as much affected grandeur as they can possibly command. The churches and houses for the religious are very numerous, the inmates of which appear to me as if they composed the far greater part of the population, and not more strict than their brothers of the Holy Trinity. Nor are the ladies less accommodating if I understand them right. But of this I shall soon know more, by means of the letter of Father Savedros I have to deliver, whom I greatly pity, and for whose future peace I am truly interested. The letter is addressed to a very near relation of the president of the Royal Alidencia, whose province is similar to that of our Lord Chancellor ; but with this difference, he is obliged to keep a court that vies in splendour with the governor's. The various subordinate offices at the president's disposal, attaches great numbers to his service, all of whom, on certain days, pay their court, when there is evidently a grand struggle who shall make the most splendid appearance ; and to that excess they used to carry this ridiculous ostentation, that it not unfrequently caused the ruin of families. At present, however, this mania appears to have abated with the men, but the ladies still maintain their prero-

gative of dress and parade ; for though they wear now but just drapery enough to cover the middle part of their bodies, yet there is as much foppery or vanity, or whatever name you may choose to give it, displayed in the little they do wear, as was formerly employed in their more cumbersome and extravagant dresses. I will give, as well as I am able, a slight sketch of a lady to whom I had the honour of an introduction yesterday ; she is a near relation of Cardinal ———, at St. Jago, on a visit from Lima.

She is about the middle size, neither fair nor brown, with black hair, black eyes, and good teeth ; her face and features were not striking, but very well for a great lady, who always has it in her power to supply by art the deficiencies of nature. To begin then with her chemise ;—(for all the component parts of her dress were distinctly visible,) it was of the finest cambric, the bottom of which was trimmed with very broad point lace, of about twenty guineas a yard, but the cambric reached no farther than the top of the knee : silk stockings of a pale blush, embroidered with small rose buds of silver ; her slippers, or rather sandals, were of silver tissue, embroidered with red rose buds, banded round the instep and ankle after the Indian manner ; but instead of ribbon they were of pearl and emeralds, and served to display, to the greatest advantage, a beautifully formed foot



A LADY OF LIMA IN HER WEDDING DRESS.



and ankle. The stockings were fastened at the top with the celebrated Indian garters, which contained a talisman, the value of which is highly rated, as it is supposed to warn the wearer of every good or evil that is to befall them, and no lady, I am told, would be seen in company without them, being considered as the most essential part of their dress. They may be worn either round the leg or the upper part of the arm, and are invariably of one shape; that of a flat garter with springs, but covered with the most costly materials, according to the fortune or caprice of the wearer. The lady's in question were of satin, set on each side with alternate pearl and emerald: in the centre of each garter was an opening in the form of a lozenge, which contains the talisman. This also was set round with the same costly materials; and it clasped on the outside of the leg with an emerald, from which depended two tassels of oriental pearls. I must own this part of the dress pleased me much; as there appeared to be so much real taste displayed in the arrangement of it. A close vest of silver tissue formed the shape, to which was fastened with pearls a drapery of point lace, reaching as low as where the cambric ended. This drapery was bordered at the bottom with a fringe about three inches deep, of the same intermixture of jewellery as the sandals. The neck, bosom, and arms were decorated, in the same man-

ner, with a profusion of pearls: but they had no covering, except a fall of fine point lace from the sleeve of the chemise. The hair, of which the ladies here have a great quantity, was banded and looped with pearls; and on one side was a large bunch of white roses composed of pearl, with leaves of emeralds. These, together with the happy arrangement of the hair, formed one of the most simple; and at the same time the most pleasing head-dresses I had ever seen; so that the lady was altogether the most interesting figure I had seen since my arrival in Chili. Besides the soft tone of her voice, with her mild and gentle manners, all bespoke a mind perfectly in unison with the simplicity, yet grandeur and magnificence of her exterior appearance.

So much for a description of a lady's dress: as it is my first essay, I assure you it will be the last, for I knew not by what names I should describe the different parts; indeed I was obliged to have recourse to the lady's nurse, who has been most kindly communicative, for an explanation. She readily answered all my questions, and entered into a detail of the change of fashions for the last twenty years. With every new ship that arrives at Lima direct from Europe, the dresses of the ladies and gentlemen undergo a revolution, which quickly extends to all the distant provinces; so that the ancient costume of the different states is





KING DRESS OF A LADY OF RANK &
HER SERVANT, OF CHILE.

altogether done away with, or confined to those of the lower order. She said the dresses of both sexes are still carried to an unbounded excess, when they assemble in the Grand Place to witness a bull fight, a procession, or any public spectacle. They are often attended by two or three, or more servants, habited in the most costly liveries, one of them charged with the care of a large nosegay, another with an embroidered handkerchief, a third with a parasol, and so on. The latter article is here one of the most expensive of a lady's dress: it is not unusual to have them made of the finest and most expensive French lace, lined with silk and edged with gold or silver fringe of prodigious depth, the stick of ivory, mounted with gold or silver, and the ribs not unfrequently set with jewels of great value.

Many of the Fathers are busily employed in preparations for the festival of the Purification; and never was so much money squandered in pious pageantry and nonsense, as they are now throwing away: the lighting up of the church, and the procession candles alone will cost, I am assured, twelve thousand pieces of eight. If superstition has no other advantage, it causes money to circulate by its expensive mummeries, which in the eye of reason, must be considered as in direct opposition to that simplicity, which is one

of the genuine, and indeed, most distinguishing features of the Christian religion.

I have this day, with the Father Provincial, paid a visit to a gentleman recently arrived from the city of the Conception; and, in my walk, had an opportunity of seeing some of the principal parts of the city. It is large, and extremely well laid out; abounding with magnificent churches, the greater part of them having large open areas or squares, termed *Placeras*, which afford a commanding view of the edifice. The Palace of the Royal Audencia, occupies a large space, and has in some respects an appearance like the houses at Chester, having piazzas in front, the whole length of it: this building contains all the different offices of the Government, both civil and military. The Bishop is absolute lord over all ecclesiastical affairs, and every thing appears to be conducted with great order and regularity. I was taken also to a celebrated Oratory of St. Bruno, situated in La Placera de St. Saturnino, (one of the principal squares) where all processions pass on their visit to St. Bruno, of which Saint I know not how many miracles are related, and either said or sung in procession to his shrine. But these processions, I am told are not now so frequent or so numerous attended as at former periods. I have not as yet seen any of the

Clergy attached to the missions, and Father Pablo but rarely discourses on the subject. Something most assuredly is in agitation of great importance, for three messengers have come from Lima, within this last fortnight; and six crown officers, charged with dispatches from the Governor, have gone from hence; but all about me are obstinately silent on every topic but domestic ones. Don John set off yesterday in great haste, immediately after the last messenger had arrived: when he took leave of Father Pablo and myself he seemed much agitated. He was not certain how long his stay might be, but should it be of any continuance he should not fail to apprise our Superior of it.—I conjecture all is not tranquil at Lima; for the Governor, I am informed, is wholly taken up in examining papers sent to him, and dispatching messengers. The militia of this district have received orders to assemble this week, and directions have also been sent to the Town House to get ready every man's arms, for service as occasion may require. I have not met with any French except two factors, of whom I ventured to make some inquiries; but they either could not or would not give me any satisfaction.

Now, my friend, would be the time to strike a bold stroke for the poor Indians of Paraguay, and the Uruguay. These provinces, once more in the possession of the natives, would quickly

carry all before them, provided they were commanded by British Officers; in that case they would not be long in reaching this delightful country, and joining their force to the Chilians, who are the bravest and most humane of all the Indians, and the only nation that has not been conquered by the Spaniards. They maintained with invincible courage, patience and resolution, an uninterrupted war for one hundred and two years, commencing with the invaders, and continued on by their successors, without interruption, for the whole of that period; when the Spaniards were compelled to sue for peace, at least the missionaries found means to bring about an accommodation, by which it was agreed, that the Spaniards should retain what they were then masters of, but not to advance further into the country on any pretence whatever. No Spaniard to make any Indian slaves, or to consider them in any other light than a brave, free, and independent people.

The Indians and Spaniards reciprocally signed this treaty, of which the above is a mere outline. The Indians, with that honour and integrity which mark their character and influence their conduct, most rigidly adhered to it; while the Spaniards, as soon as they found themselves strong enough to risque an infringement, did not scruple to break through the whole; which has

for these last thirty years, occasioned perpetual warfare. An ancient Indian told me, they might then have easily extirpated the Spaniards, if the English, when they were at Buenos Ayres, had made use of policy instead of arms, by securing to their interest a very large body of Indians, in the province of Pueuma and other places; all of whom, by a little management, would soon have joined the British, secured the capital, and then have marched across the Pampas, over the Cordilleras, and poured down upon St. Jago, before any possible knowledge of such an event could have reached Chili, as the Indians would have secured the passage across the mountains. The capital must then have immediately submitted; resistance, on the part of the Spaniards, would have been the height of madness, for they were too sensible of the power of the Indian arms, if led on by Europeans: they knew them also to be no less just than brave, and scrupulously tenacious of their words; so that whatever engagements they had made with the English, they would fulfil them with the most firm and undeviating integrity. This discourse served to confirm the idea I have uniformly entertained ever since my wandering in the Uruguay, Tucuman, &c. If a confidential Englishman could be sent to the interior, get adopted into any of the tribes, and take a wife from among the Indian women, a plan

of the most extensive nature, might be sketched out for him to act upon, which, with a little address, might easily be accomplished.

Instead of making a descent with troops on the coast, and marching, from thence, to attack their fortified towns, in the usual intrepid manner of Britons, the attack should be made in the rear by an Indian army, but under the directions of the British; though not at Mexico or Lima. Chili being first secured, all the rest would be made a most easy conquest; as from thence every thing could be drawn, that is requisite to maintain the most numerous armies.

The mines of Chili are the richest in the world; the knowledge of which, the Indians have, with the most unparalleled bravery, kept entirely to themselves: besides, it is, by their laws, instant death to any one who should discover to a Spaniard the approaches to any of the gold mines. They have therefore remained unworked ever since the Chilians obtained the victory over Valdivia, but they would soon be opened to reward their liberators; and the natural produce of Chili is so abundant, that provisions of every kind could be supplied with profusion. On this presumption, I cannot see any apparent obstacle, to prevent the completion of the work I have in theory accomplished.

I have fortunately found in the Convent Library

a manuscript History of Chili, which appears to be written with great impartiality: it does not say that it was ever published, at least not here, though it might in Old Spain: but, be that as it may, this manuscript will give, I think, a perfect knowledge of the people, for whom I am so much interested, and convince you I am not led away by an ignis fatuus. I will make as good a translation of the most material parts as I possibly can. I only wish I had found it sooner, lest I should be prevented from taking it to my room; for there is no possibility of writing in the library, there being constantly one or other of the Fathers passing in and out, though not to study; there is no occasion for that at present—for although the community is very numerous, I have noticed but three of the Brothers who appear to reflect at all: one of them appears melancholy in the extreme, and is seldom seen but at the hours when his presence is an essential duty. I have never met him but once in the Garden, and then he hurried from me as if afraid I should accost him: there is something in his manner still more mysterious than that of the truly unhappy Father Savedro, of the Holy Trinity, whose history I would fain give you; but I pledged my honour to remain silent, till, as he expressed himself, the short span between him and eternity was terminated for ever. I am very anxious to hear from him,

which I have not done for these last four months. Should he have reached his ardently-desired haven, I shall rejoice; for then I am certain he is at rest. I shall regard it as the peculiar kindness of Heaven, to recall his suffering spirit, to enjoy a reward for all the unmerited miseries he has experienced on earth.

Another messenger is arrived from Lima, and our Superior is summoned to attend the Bishop. His Lordship's Chancellor, Chaplain, and Secretary, have been here for the last three hours in close council with the Elders of the House, and are called upon in great haste to attend with our Superior. Adieu.

LETTER XI.

I HAVE been endeavouring all this morning, to gain some kind of intelligence respecting the messenger of yesterday, but nothing can I obtain. I have rambled over half the city, been to the town-house, entered several of the offices, where all wore the aspect of bustle and confusion, but all were mute. I was therefore confined to observation only, a novice not being permitted to ask any questions. Tired and vexed, I returned to my convent, and with the good Father Pablo passed an hour in improving conversation, which was interrupted by the refectory bell summoning to dinner. As soon as I withdrew, I hastened to the library, and fortunately succeeded in obtaining the manuscript history, and, to do away my chagrin, I set about the translation.

Thus then my Author :

THE Kingdom of Chili commences about the twenty-fifth degree of south latitude, and is the last and most remote of all the Spanish conquests. It

extends in length five hundred leagues, is bounded by the straits of Magellan, which reaches to the fifty-ninth degree; but its breadth is not adequate to its length, not being more than thirty leagues, from the coast to the boundaries of the Cordillera Nevada. But as the province of Cuyo, on the eastern side of the mountains, was by his Majesty's command added to the kingdom of Chili, its breadth may be considered as extending one hundred and fifty leagues east and west, composed of vast plains running in a parallel line the whole length of Chili: the Snowy Mountains serving as a partition wall to divide those kingdoms. Their longest day is fourteen hours, on the feast of St. Luke, and the shortest on that of St. Barnaby. Chili Proper, except in the opposition of the seasons, is almost in all respects similar to Europe, it being spring and summer in one, when it is autumn and winter in the other. In one particular it has the advantage, as neither the heat nor the cold are ever in extremes: an even temperature being experienced, especially from thirty-six degrees: so that day or night you have no occasion to complain of heat. Another blessing peculiar to Chili, is, that it is not subject to thunder and lightning as at Cuyo; neither are there any sudden storms of hail and rain, or cloudy days; for whenever it rains, which is sometimes for two or three days or weeks together, as soon as the rain

subsides, the sky appears as serene and clear as if no rain had fallen: for the instant the north wind ceases, and the south begins to blow, all clouds are dispersed and driven with rapidity away. Among other inviting peculiarities of this country, not a venomous reptile lives there; so that you may walk, or even sleep in the woods and gardens, without the least fear of being bit by either snake or viper, or any other dangerous reptile. Nor in the forests or caves do there inhabit any ferocious animals, such as tigers, hyenas, or panthers: there is known only a very small species of lion, and of those but few, who are never known to attack man; and if ever they do any mischief, it is confined to depredations on the wild goats, that live altogether in the mountains.

All these blessings are the more wonderful when it is known, that, they are not possessed by the provinces of Cuyo, Buenos Ayres and Tucuman, though in the same latitude as Chili. The climate of these three provinces is almost the reverse of Chili, although there is only the Cordillera Nevada between them. In winter they have not any rain, but a clear and serene sky; not a cloud to be seen; and, at the same time, the frost may be so severe, that it frequently kills both man and beast, who may be exposed by night to its inclemency: but as soon as the

spring begins, the rain, although the showers do not last so long as those in Chili, is so sudden and impetuous, that, in the space of an hour the whole country is covered with water like a sea. These sudden showers are always accompanied with thunder and hail, of the most terrifying nature; the hail-stones being of such a size as to destroy, and bury every thing within its reach. This great difference in the climate and weather is produced or found, in the mountains, invariably on the eastern side; keeping Chili in a state of even tranquillity, where the seasons are steady and constant: every season has its accustomed state of heat and cold, wind or rain, in conformity to the length or shortness of the days, and the course of the sun, which causes the same changes as in Europe, reversing the months, as the spring begins here in the middle of August, and ends the middle of November; then commences the summer which lasts till the middle of February; then autumn closes in the middle of May: winter then succeeds, when the trees are stripped of the leaves, and a white frost covers the ground during the night, but it seldom remains four and twenty hours. It is very rare to have any snow in the valleys, as it seldom descends lower than the mountain on which it rests till spring, when it is gradually dissolved by the rays of the sun, and descends in brooks

and rivers, refreshing the ground as they pass: the earth then produces the most bounteous crops of various grain, fruit, and herbs.

The valleys, in the neighbourhood of the Cordillera, are subject to the cold and piercing winds, that issue from these wonderful barriers, which are at times almost insupportable: but as you descend towards the coast, the air becomes temperate, being meliorated by the sea breezes. These winds from the mountains would be more severely felt, were they not checked in their progress, by very thick woods, that serve for fuel to the inhabitants of the city of St. Jago, and indeed to all the country. These woods have the appearance of oak at a distance; but they consist of a very beautiful tree to look upon, more durable than oak, and of a deep red colour. It grows in abundance round St. Jago, where no other fuel is made use of; although there are numerous groves of oak, yet the natives make use of the other in preference. The oaks, as well as fruit trees, lose their leaves in winter, as in Europe; yet there are many other kind of trees in the valleys, that retain their verdure even when covered with frozen snow; yet as soon as the spring appears, and the rain falls, they emerge from their covering, as if they had just put on the most delightful verdure; and had been beholden to the ice and snow for their new apparel. So it is with the grass and the herbs of the field; for in about

three or four weeks after the spring begins, and the rain falls, the fields appear overspread with all the most delightful produce of nature; every blessing of life seems to struggle which shall offer the greatest abundance: innumerable flowers grow in the pastures, as also flowering shrubs, and aromatic herbs, on which the cattle delight to browse; and, turn your eye which way soever you will, the fields appear as so many gardens. The fields are not enclosed as in Europe; each inhabitant marks out what spot he chooses to sow with seed, and there is no one will say you trespass on my ground; nor is there any tax to be paid. All is free, and the cattle rove unmolested; they are taught when young to come to their owner when he wants them, by making use of a particular sound or whistle, each person having their own, to which they are very obedient. Thus plenty surrounds the husbandman, for he who sows, is always certain of reaping: in Chili his hopes are never disappointed. The wild flowers which grow in the field, would, from their beauty and sweet scents, be highly valued in Europe, as the superior ornaments of our gardens and conservatories; while they are here in such profusion, that they are distilled in vast quantities, and produce the perfumed water, called angels' water, used in the churches.

In the gardens are to be seen in spring, all kinds of shrubs and flowers that are natives of

other climates, as well as that of Chili, and particularly of Europe, are of the most luxuriant growth. All exotics become, as it were, immediately naturalized : and such is the fertility of the soil, that its produce is infinite, and the rapidity of it would be incredible to all but the eye that beholds it. The grass grows to a surprising height, and the mustard rises into a tree. There are groves of these trees, in which the birds build their nests ; they are seldom less than twelve feet high, and branchy in proportion ; thus verifying the description of the Gospel. But the mustard is not the only plant that grows wild ; all sorts of esculent roots and herbs that are reared with care in Europe, in gardens, are seen for leagues together, in the greatest profusion, furnishing food for the cattle, who feed on them at pleasure. Such food makes all kind of meat so much more rich and strengthening, as well as of a finer flavour than the animal meats of any other province.

Nor is Chili less gifted with all kinds of medicinal plants and herbs, but the knowledge of whose virtues is confined to the Indian doctors, who are very skilful in their application. The knowledge of them they keep most carefully concealed from the Spaniards ; but notwithstanding their precaution, we have obtained the discovery of several of them by dint of observation and experience ; particularly the famous one named

Quimbamali. It is a dwarf plant which rises about eight or ten inches above the ground, with spreading branches, each ending in small flowers at the point, which, both in colour and shape, resemble those of saffron: when wanted for use, they pull up the plant and boil it entire, with its roots, leaves, and flowers, in spring-water: the decoction is given to the patient to drink hot, and is a powerful interior as well as exterior vulnerary. In all cases of internal bruises or wounds, it causes an instant evacuation of all blood that is congealed; which, by remaining in the body, might cause inflammation, obstruction, and finally death; but a draught of this not only cures internally, but external wounds are alike healed by it. There is another called *Albaquella*. It grows in bushes, as high as the tallest rose-tree, with leaves like sweet basil, which are very fragrant, and sweet to the taste, like honey: it is commonly bruised for use, and in cases of wounds, some of the juice is dropped into the part, and the bruised leaves laid over, which, without any other application, never fails to effect a cure in a very short time. This herb grows wild, and is to be met with almost every where. Another much spoken of but not so common, is a specific for fevers and pleurisies. It is a small herb, low on the ground, with not more than six or eight leaves; in the middle of which grows a small tuft, like he-

finest thread or hair, of a white colour, inclining to yellow; the tuft only is made use of boiled in spring-water. I have only mentioned these among the great number of medicinal herbs, with which this country abounds, because they are the only ones of which I could speak from actual experience.

I shall proceed now to give a brief account of the trees, some of which do not exceed in size those of Europe, of the same kind; as the cherry, quince, pomegranate, almond, orange, olive, lemon, apricot, citron, peach, and many others; but for apple trees, I have frequently seen them as big and tall as elms of a large size, and pear trees still bigger, and much more the mulberry, which grows to a surprising height and bigness. All these trees have been brought from Europe, and their increase is really wonderful. America is also obliged to Europe for bread corn, maize being the only grain known to the Indians before the Spaniards came among them: also wine they knew not, but will indulge in it to excess when they can procure it. The trees natural to the country, are of two sorts; one is fruit trees, the other not: of the first, I find only three sorts or species, which are the avellanos, a small nut, the pine tree, and the algarrobos, or cod tree. Of those that are not properly fruit trees, are the laurel, the oak, the willow which grows very

large, as does the cypress still larger, and in such abundance, that they are constantly employed in buildings of every kind, as in fine work for domestic use. These trees grow most commonly in the precipices of the Cordilleras, which being very deep, cause them to grow extremely large and tall, as they shoot up till their tops can be warmed by the sun; so that they are as straight as a wax candle, and are so fragrant, that though they are so plentiful they bear a good price. The cedar trees are without comparison, bigger and have much larger heads than the cypress trees. The colour of the tree is red, when it is first worked, but in time loses the bright lively colour, and becomes nearly brown. The planks are in general sawed of the same breadth and length as those of the cypress: besides, they are not so subject to worm, and much more easy to work. The oaks also yield very large planks, for they thrive exceedingly, and grow very thick: some of them are white, but they speedily decay, while those which are red are incorruptible. The Paraguay tree is of less value: it is very branchy, keeping its leaves green all the year, and very much resembling our European elms. The most common wood of all, and that of which there is the greatest plenty, and most generally used in building, is the cinnamon wood. These are also very large trees, and make a beautiful

appearance ; they keep their leaves all the year, and much resemble those that in Italy are called the laurel royal. The Guaya tree is peculiar to the mountains of the Cordillera, which is supposed from them to derive its hardness and heaviness ; it is like iron, and the balls made of it to play at billiards are as hard as the ivory ones. The tree is not large, and the heart of the wood is a yellow mixed with green ; a decoction of this wood is good for many infirmities. The sandal tree is very odoriferous, and there are great quantities of them in the island of Juan Fernandez. It is used like camphor, as a preservative against the plague or epidemic fevers, and is always worn by the confessors, and all those who are obliged to attend infected persons. There are many other trees, of admirable medicinal virtues, with which the Indians perform wonderful cures.

The fruit trees in the mountains are many, and of great variety. We will speak first of that truly valuable and beautiful tree the palm, which for its abundant blessings in its fruit claims our first notice, as first in value: they grow generally upon the mountains and precipices in which they delight, and so thick together, that seeing them at a distance, one would think they were a clump set by hand: they are very thick and high, and the body is free from branches or leaves, to the top or first sprout: its nature is to lose all its first

branches, as the young ones come out ; by which means, the body of the tree, rising free and disincumbered from all boughs, which in other trees grow on the side, is totally employed in feeding the top, and the fruit within it, bearing as it were a citadel round it, to preserve it by the admirable texture of its leaves and branches, which enclose it round.

These palm trees have this wonderful property, that none of them will yield fruit, unless, as it were, in sight of each other: and if it happen that one comes up alone, without a companion, although it grows large, and attains a great height, yet it never bears unless another be planted near it. I have seen this experiment tried frequently and never knew it fail: the fruit of these trees is called cocoa, and is something like a filbert, though much bigger, and the meat within the shell is not solid but hollow, growing round the inner edge, to the thickness of a crown piece; and within it is a kind of milk or water, of an excellent cooling taste, and so is the meat, which is white, and serves to preserve the liquor like a phial, and which is not imbibed by the cocoa in less than some months; but then they will keep as almond and other kernels. Many authors say, that this cocoa is good against poison; and nature seems to set a peculiar value on it, by the many covers in which it is involved: first, the

kernel is covered with a shell harder than that of the almond; then succeeds another cover, of a green colour and sometimes yellow, which is woven so close about it, that, when it is green, it is easier to break it than peel it off. The fruit grows close to a stalk, which sometimes will have above a thousand on it; and this surrounded by a great shell, which increases with the great bunch it contains, till at last the fruit bursts from its enclosure, which opens into two parts, resembling boats, each of above half a yard long, and two spans diameter in the broadest place. The bunch within, is of a fine yellow very beautiful to look on: it hangs on the branches till it is ripe, and then falls to the ground, where it is gathered, and great quantities of it is sent to Peru. Our people also make sweetmeats of them, and also various playthings for the children.

The palm trees which bear dates do not seem to be natural to this country, but were brought from abroad, as I never saw them wild in the fields, but only in gardens. There are other wild fruit trees which grow in the fields, and are called Penga: they bear a red fruit, something bigger and more oval than filberts. These the Indians eat boiled, with other ingredients, in strong soup. There are also trees called Magues, which are very beautiful, and are of a very cooling

nature ; the leaves are admirable to cure a burn, and the fruit is black, like a myrtle berry, and is well tasted ; it blackens the mouth and hands when it is eaten, and, for that reason the higher people do not often use it. There are also fruits of which the Indians make their fermented liquors, whose names and properties I cannot recollect, but, I know there is a great variety of them : one, indeed, I remember, called Queler ; the fruit is very sweet, and small, between red and yellow, of which they make a very pleasant drink. They make another beverage, of what they call Hurgan, and the Spaniards Molle : it is of a shape and colour like pepper ; the tree on which they grow is but small, but is a great bearer : this drink is very agreeable and coveted by the greatest ladies. The most common beverage of the Indians, is made of maize, which is the ordinary bread and sustenance of all the natives. The last I recollect, is the tree called Mirtilla, which, if we believe the authors who treat of it, deserves to be ranked in the first place ; this is what they say of it. This tree grows in the mountains, from seventy-two degrees upwards, and is the common food : the natives call it Une, and the Spaniards Mirtilla ; it is red and like a small grape, and in shape and colour, like a pomegranate seed ; it smells and tastes very agreeably, and not unlike a grape ; it has small grains like a fig, which are almost imperceptible on the tongue.

Its temperature is hard and dry: of this they make a wine, which exceeds all other liquors, even that of the East India cocoa or palm tree. Neither cider, mead, nor beer, nor all the other drinks, described by Andreas de Laquana, are to be compared to it. This wine is clear, fine, warm, and very agreeable to the taste, as well as strengthening to the stomach. It consumes all vapours in the head; its heat warming the ears without going any further. It increases the appetite, never offending the head or making it heavy. Those who have tasted it highly commend its colour and flavour, as much as that of grapes. Its colour is golden and bright, and is as good and sweet as the wine of Ciudad Real. There is little of it made, and thus it lasts but a short time; for which reason, 'tis not known how many years it would keep: it takes up as much labour, and care as wine in the making. If it is left to itself and without fire, 'tis forty days before it ferments; it casts down a lee, and works out the frothy part at the top of the vessel, and for that reason care is taken to scum it as it rises; and when it ceases, 'tis then drawn off into another vessel, and is fit for use. When 'tis turned to vinegar, it has a better taste and colour than wine vinegar, as it retains the colour and scent of the fruit, which is very odoriferous.—Thus far Father Herrera. Hence it may be inferred, that this land had

good wine of its own; it has also very good oil, made of a seed called Made; 'tis extremely well tasted, but not much in use, because, that of olives is so plentiful. It is not possible to describe all the various sorts of trees, that are common in the woods and mountains of Chili; there are few of them that do not keep their leaves all winter; particularly those that grow wild, which are, in general, very aromatic, and of a very fragrant smell. All the finest of this kind, are bred in the territory of the Conception, which abounds more with them, than any other. I should not have believed it if I had not seen it; as, in travelling, I have passed through the most pleasant, lovely groves, which bordered the highways, and cast out so rich a smell from their leaves, that the flowers of jessamine could not be sweeter. There are abundance of groves of myrtle and laurel which grow wild; and yet there are among them, trees whose scents exceed them infinitely; for when you pass your hand over the leaves, you would imagine they had been washed with the most costly perfumes.

After having treated thus much of woods and groves, it behoves me to say something of the feathered inhabitants. To begin with the king of them all, the eagle: there are in all the woods abundance of them, but, those which are called the imperial, have never been seen but twice:

the first, was a short time before the arrival of the Spaniards; and the second time, 1640, when that warlike nation the Araucanos made peace with the Spaniards, and many thousands of them came over from the grossest ignorance, to embrace the faith of our Holy Church, and submit themselves to God and our King: they interpreting the appearance of these birds, as one of the signs of God Almighty's will, to direct them to embrace the faith of Christ, and live in amity with the Spaniards; in consequence of which, they with one consent laid down their arms, and became subjects to Spain. as for the ordinary eagles they are and always, have been, numerous. Next to the eagles are the falcons, which for their beauty are caught young, and trained to send as presents to European princes. There is also a great many other sorts of birds of prey. Of the singing birds there is a great variety, and of the same kinds as in Europe: among them I must not omit the robin-red-breast, which is by the Indians held in the highest veneration: they call them Voycas or omen birds: these birds, they imagine by the difference in their notes, always forwarn them of either death or sickness, or any misfortune that is to befall them or their friends; therefore to kill or injure any of these birds, is thought the most heinous crime of which they can be guilty.

The birds for game are garzas, partridges, wild pigeons, thrushes, turtles, and parrots : wild ducks are out of number, of almost every colour, and are excellent food. The domestic tame fowls are all of the same kind as in Europe, such as turkeys, geese, hens, ducks, and tame pigeons, all in the greatest plenty: there are also swallows in summer, that leave us in the winter, for warmer climes as in Europe: there are also screech owls, bats and other night birds. But it is really impossible to describe the native birds, from their wonderful variety, and incredible abundance: indeed, as soon as the grapes begin to ripen they do great mischief, notwithstanding every device is employed, either to catch or fright them away. Every one is indeed obliged, as it were, to mount guard; for if continual care and vigilance are not observed, they are sure to find the vintage made to their hands. The corn and maize is obliged to be watched, in the same manner as are all garden seeds;—for nothing can withstand the voracity of the parrots, who have bills that cut like a razor: they come in flocks, of such an extent as to darken the air, and fill it with such a confusion of cries, that, I know of nothing like it. This kind of bird is bred all over Chili, in the mountains, and in the Cordilleras; 'tis most wonderful to see how exactly they come when the fruit begins to ripen. They come down from

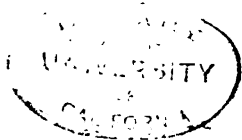
the mountains in the evening, and the noise they make in flying, though they fly high, is such as baffles description. They have a shrill clear voice, and fly all screaming at once: they are green and yellow, have a blue circle about their necks; and are very good to eat, particularly the young ones.

As soon as the weather begins to be cool, before the winter sets in, every evening for many days together, great quantities of crows come down from the Cordilleras into the plains, about an hour before sun-set: they arrive in squadrons, forming a triangle, the point of which is led by one single bird; the figure they make is with exact arrangement to each other, as if they were fixed in the air and immoveable, so equal and well concerted is their flight. The arrival of these birds, in this form, is considered by the natives as prognosticating a rainy season.

There is likewise a bird called *taltulas*, or *galinasos*: it is like a duck, but has larger wings; they are either black or brown and very voracious of carrion: in the time of the annual slaughtering the cattle, these birds come and gorge themselves to that degree, that they cannot rise to fly, so that they are easily killed with sticks in great numbers: they are taken for their quills and the bones of their legs. They sustain themselves at other times by hunting young goats and lambs which they

are very dexterous in catching. There is another bird, of a similar kind both as to bigness, colour, shape, and disposition to prey : these are called peuques, only they are something less, and more nice in the choice of their food, being pleased with nothing but fowls which they seize upon very adroitly : they are so bold and nimble as to get into a henroost and carry away their prey even in sight of the owners, without it being possible to prevent them. Among the many birds which breed in the lakes, waters, and on the sea-side, none are more remarkable than the birds called flamincos ; they are white and scarlet, bigger than turkeys, but so long legged that they will walk through a lake of no great depth, the water not touching their feathers. The Indians make most beautiful cloaks and other ornaments of their white and scarlet feathers, for their dances and feasts. There is another curious bird called the child bird, as it looks like a child wrapt in swaddling clothes, but I know not its properties.

There is a most elegant bird called acroves which furnishes the tufts of feathers of that name so highly valued in Europe, as every feather is valued at two, and sometimes three rials ; those that grow under their wings are larger and better than those on their heads, and form an aigrette. They are indeed very beautiful, but being very delicate, are not able to endure sudden



transitions of weather, by which means they do not increase like others that are more hardy.

There are plenty of that kind of bird called garcolas, which serve for soldiers' feathers, and various other ornaments. There are many also of a great variety of colours, whose names I know not, and of which the Indians make their mallenguas, an ornament for the head like a garland of the finest colours, in the forming of which the Indians shew great taste and judgment. These mallenguas are worn on their days of rejoicing and ceremony, in which they are as punctilious as the most polite nations. There is also a very little bird called pinguedas, whose body is not much bigger than an almond: they live entirely on flowers like bees; and that they may procure the honey with ease, nature has furnished them with a bill which when shut is like a sewing needle, and this enables them to feed, flying like bees, from flower to flower, without lighting, but very seldom on a branch of it, and that very lightly. These birds are of the greatest beauty imaginable: if they were made of polished gold they could not shine brighter: they are of a green colour mingled with gold: the males are distinguished from the females, by the feathers on the head being of a bright orange, which in the sun looks like fire. These birds on the eastern side of the Cordilleras, are still more beautiful, because their tail is of the same colour as their head,

and though they have so small a body, their tail is a foot long and two inches broad. There is likewise a very singular bird which the Spaniards have named *puxero carpentero* ; because though they are but small, yet they have so strong and sharp a bill that they form their nests with it in the body of the tree, forming a hollow place, fit for them, as if with an instrument : of these I have seen but few. There are great numbers of a bird called *condorres*, which are as white as snow, and of their skins they make that which they call *kegallilos* for the hands, being of a very soft touch and extremely warm ; but the bellies of the *busards* are still more so. I have not seen such a variety of birds on the other side of the *Cordilleras*, and the cause I suppose to be the dryness of the land in summer, and the want of woods and groves which are on the *Chili* side ; but in those plains, called the *Pampas*, the *francolins* are to be found, which are a sort of wild hen, and as big ; but much better meat and of a higher relish.

There are likewise *ostriches* in great numbers. It is not easy to catch the ostrich by hunting with dogs, which is done sometimes, for, though they do not fly, yet their large wings aid them so powerfully in running, that though the greyhound be very swift, if the bird has the start he will hardly be able to overtake him : if however he comes up to him, it is wonderful the art the ostrich uses

to avoid his teeth, for when the dog is just going to seize the bird, he lets down one of his wings and fixes it to the ground, covering therewith his whole body; when the greyhound seizing the wing, fills his mouth with feathers, which so decomposes him as to interrupt his pursuit, and the ostrich generally escapes. This is very diverting sport, as is that of taking the Francolins, which is thus effected. The Indian has a string, made at one end into a running noose, and, at the other, a little piece of sharp cane fastened to it. When he has found the bird, he draws near so gently as not to fright it: when at a proper distance, he begins to go round the bird, making with the cane at the same time several circles over its head. The Francolin is by nature very timorous, and so simple, that he never attempts to rise, as he thinks himself encompassed round, but goes into the middle of the circle, where the Indian lessening his rounds, he squats down and quietly lets the Indian put the noose over its head; which done, he touches one of the wings with the sharp end of the cane, when it flies up, by which means the noose is drawn close and the bird taken. There is also another very diverting sport which consists in hunting the quultim with falcons. These are as big as fowls, and have very large wings, of which every joint is clothed with sharp points, given them by nature for

their defence. The Spaniards call these birds friars ; either because they are always seen two and two, or three and three, together, or because the colour and order of their feathers is such that you would really think they had on a hood and a frock. This sport requires more than one falcon, and they must be well taught to assist one another : there are, frequently, large parties to witness the fight, which is well worth seeing. These birds generally haunt low meadows or swampy ground ; and as soon as one is sprung, the sportsman lets fly his falcon after him ; who, as if he noticed not his game, endeavours to get as high as he can, that he may get the wind of his prey, which, at the same time, does the same thing and contends for place with his enemy, so that they both get sometimes nearly out of sight : at last the falcon, having the stronger wing, generally gets the advantage, and as soon as he finds himself high enough, he darts down upon his antagonist like lightning, when the fight begins ; when the quultim, in a masterly manner, either avoids the blow, or opposes the armed points of his wings, and the falcon is often wounded in the breast : as soon as the sportsman finds his falcon wounded, he lets fly another to help the first, who being fresh soon joins his companion, and immediately attacks the quultim, but not at the same time with the other falcon. Thus one gives him a blow and

then the other ; but notwithstanding such unequal odds, the quail makes a noble defence, till, tired out, he rapidly descends to the water, his last defence, to save his life ; here he expects his enemies on his back with the points of his armed wings turned towards them : the falcon darts down with all his force, and with one foot tears her to pieces, but he does not effect this without being severely wounded himself : the victory in general costs the falcon dear, especially when the enemy happens to be large, as he is a bird of great strength.

The manner of catching the falcon is likewise very diverting. Very fine nets are spread at certain places where he is supposed to haunt or roost ; when the hunters raise a loud peculiar cry, and rush forward, which, disturbing the falcon, he attempts to fly but is instantly secured, the net being close and fine that he may not injure his wings, which should it happen, he then can be of no service for sporting, and is either killed or let fly.

We shall now proceed to give some account of the animals. Till the Spaniards came to America there never had been seen either cows, horses, sheep, hogs, cats or rabbits, either tame or wild, nor dogs, except those called coques ; but no hounds, greyhounds, or other game dogs, neither mastiffs nor lap dogs, nor goats nor asses. But as

soon as the Spaniards were settled in Chili, and found the land so very proper for breeding cattle and flocks, they soon brought some of every kind here ; and they have increased to such a surprising degree, that there is not only enough for ten times the population, but to feed tens of thousands of carnivorous birds, who come regularly in slaughtering time to devour what is left in the fields ; and what they leave untouched, is obliged to be burnt or thrown into the rivers, that it may not corrupt the air. The murrain among cattle, so much dreaded in Europe, is here thought a necessary evil, in order to rid the country of too great an abundance. This may seem a paradox, but it is founded upon experience to be a fact ; the land being so good the cattle are fatted in such a short time as is scarcely credible. This may be believed when it is a certain fact, that scarcely any cow is killed which does not produce from a hundred and fifty to near two hundred pounds of tallow, each pound of sixteen ounces ; so that it is difficult to get a sale for it, as well as for the hides : for though Peru, where the best part of the consumption is made, is so very considerable, yet the plenty we have here is so great that we could easily supply another Peru, and still have an abundance.

For some time after the first settlement of the Spaniards in Chili, a horse was commonly sold

for a thousand pieces of eight, and sometimes more. Garcellosa says, so high a value was set upon them in Peru, that a horse could not be had for any price, unless by the death of the owner, or upon his returning to Spain; when horses were sold for four, five and six thousand pieces of eight each. He says, he knew himself a soldier that had an excellent horse and a negro, going by with him: a gentleman who saw them, sent to offer the soldier ten thousand pieces of eight for the horse and the negro, which he refused with contempt. But since that time horses have multiplied so prodigiously, that there is not people enough to feed and tend them, therefore many of them run wild. The cows have also increased so as to cover the fields, and in the vast plains of Tucuman and Buenos Ayres they are in immense herds, feeding without any owner but those who choose to catch them. I have seen in Chili, in the territory of St. Jago, horses already dressed for war, sold for two crowns a piece to supply the army, and yet for shape, courage, and good qualities, they yield to no Neapolitan, or Andalusian horses I ever saw, from whom indeed they are descended; and there is no reason why they should degenerate in such good land.

The cows, which at first were out of all price, I have seen sold for a crown a-piece, and the calves for half-a-crown; the sheep are bought

in flocks in Cuyo and Tucuman for three-pence, and three half-pence a-piece. Among the animals proper to the country of Chili, may be considered the sheep, so called by the natives : they are of the shape of camels, but not so big, and without the bunch on the back ; they are black, brown, and white, and some grey. Formerly they used to plough the land with them in many places, instead of oxen, but they only make use of them now to carry wine, wheat, maize, and other provisions. About thirty years ago they used to carry water in St. Jago from the fountains or river to the houses, but now they are not at all employed in this kind of labour, there being so many mules and asses for all domestic uses. These sheep have their upper lip slit, with which they spit, as it were, at those that vex them ; and the children, who used to do it, commonly run away when they see they are about to eject their saliva, for wherever it falls on the skin it causes an inflammation, and their neck being near three feet long they can use these kind of arms with considerable effect. Their wool is very highly valued for its delicacy and softness, the handsomest cloaks and mantles, that can be imagined, are made of it. The drivers regulate their motions by a kind of bridle passed through holes made in their ears, which, by pulling the reins, govern their movements : they

kneel down to be loaded, and when it is well fastened, they rise without bidding, and move on in a very grave, steady pace.

There are likewise natural to Chili, little animals of the rabbit kind, which the Indians call Pegus, and of them they make a very nice kind of soup, of which they are extremely fond: they are wild, and the taking of them affords very good sport. There are another sort of little rabbits, which the Indians call Cuyes, and are tame: they are delicate little creatures, very prettily spotted with various colours; and are seen in great plenty in the houses or yards; sometimes, indeed, they live in the gardens. The animals called Guanacos, chamois or wild goats, are very like the country sheep, as well in their shape as motions, but they are of a different colour, being of a clear red, and so very wild they never can be tamed. They herd in large flocks on the plains of Tucuman and Cuyo, have very long legs, and are so swift of foot, that the best horse cannot overtake them; yet it is easy to kill the young ones, or those that have not been hunted, because, being so tall and their bones not yet well set, they are easily tired; so by following a flock of them on horse-back with dogs, the young, unable to keep up with their dams, are easily taken, as they have nothing but their speed to depend upon.

These creatures breed, in a bag they have under the belly, the bezoar stones, so much celebrated for their virtue and admirable qualities, in all cases of poison, malignant fevers, and nervous affections. These animals eat from instinct to cure themselves, when bit by any venomous creature, or have eaten of any poisonous herb. These stones are found in the oldest guanacos, and the reason is, that, their natural heat not being so strong as that of the young ones, they cannot convert into their substance all the strength of the herb they take, to remedy their complaint; nature therefore has provided, that what remains, shall be deposited in the bag, and there be converted into a substance, capable of administering to the human frame the same cures it does to the animal. The stone is composed of several coats, some thicker, some thinner, according to the quantity of the herbs taken by the animal at a time. It has been constantly observed, that where there are most vipers and other poisonous creatures, these stones are most plentiful; and the cause is manifest, because these animals, and the deer kind in feeding, traverse over a great space of ground, therefore are the more exposed to the attacks of poisonous animals, which when trod upon or disturbed sting severely. When they find themselves hurt by a reptile, they make directly to the remedy,

which they never fail to find; and as they have more frequently occasion to seek relief in these herbs, by being more often hurt in the plains of Cuyo and Tucuman, than in Chili, it is easily accounted for, why these stones should be found in greater quantities than in any other part, where they are accustomed to herd. Another consideration is, that the guanacos delight more in plains than high land, and there are by far more poisonous creatures and herbs in these two provinces, by being so very extensive, and having in summer such very great heats, in which all reptiles delight; but nature, in her gracious bounty, has scattered every where, with a liberal hand, an immediate antidote for every poison. Were it not, indeed, for such instinct implanted in the animal world, the whole race might become extinct, by the poisons, either animal or vegetable, which they are constantly encountering.

The bigness of these stones is in proportion to the animal that breeds them: the most certain rule is, that if they are small there are many in the bag, and fewer if large, and at times, when very large, there is but one. I carried with me to Italy one that weighed thirty-two ounces; but it was not the size that rendered it the more valuable, but its virtues and shape, for it was a perfect oval, as if it had been formed by a turner. The

Indian who found it had seventy pieces of eight. When a large stone is found it is not sold by weight, but according to general estimation: and the bigger they are, the greater the price: people of quality will buy them at any price, for they not only use them in cases of sickness, but make use of them as preventives.

The way of using them, is to put them whole into a vase of wine or water, or into the glass, out of which you constantly drink; and the longer they remain in it, the more virtue they communicate: this is the general way of using them by those in health: but when attacked by any violent sickness, you should grate off about a small spoonful, and take it in any kind of liquid that may be most agreeable; when it never fails to relieve the patient in all cases of poison, in a very short time.

Hares are also bred in the Pampas, or the plains of Cuyo, and one kind in particular named chirichinchos, whose flesh tastes like that of sucking pigs, is much sought after, for the delicious dish it makes; they are taken in pitfalls by the Indians, who watch at a distance till the sun goes down, when these hares are sure to be seen hunting out, with great haste, a small plant, like trefoil, on which they commonly feed: this herb with its root, the Indians place on the top of the pit; when seeing the herbage it is

in quest of, it springs forward, and the suddenness of the leap, causes the trap to give way, and the animal is taken.

Squirrels are not numerous in Chili: I do not recollect seeing them in any other place than the valley of Guasco, and these are grey, or pale ash colour; their skins are very highly valued, on account of the warmth and delicacy of their fur, it being extremely pleasing to the feel. They are caught by placing a sort of balance stick, equally poised, across the branch of a tree, which they are seen to frequent: each end of the stick has some favourite fruit they delight in, placed on it, which as soon as they attempt to take off, the stick drops downwards, taking the squirrel with it, and falling into a basket properly placed to receive it, and a net very close worked, closes him in a moment. This mode of taking them is practised, in order that the skin might not be rubbed, or otherwise injured, which must be the case, were they to shoot or knock them down: their scarcity renders them extremely dear.

There are not any rats or mice in Chili, but on the coast. These are supposed to have been brought in a Dutch ship, that was wrecked there some few years ago, as none of these animals were ever seen there before. Thus, I have given as good an account as possible of the animals of Chili which have fallen under my own observation.

Of the Summer and Autumn, with their Products.

THE summer begins in the middle of November, and lasts to the middle of February, so that the greatest heats are at Christmas and we are here ready to melt beneath their influence. About this time the fruits begin to ripen, and are in great variety, for we have all those of Europe: The fruit that exceeds all the rest for bearing is the apple, of all kinds of which there are orchards of most surprising extent, which never fail to yield astonishing quantities; for although they pluck vast numbers of the young trees, yet the remainder increase so much in size, that they presently weigh down the branches, which are propped up with stout forks of wood, to prevent their falling, to do hurt to the accidental passenger. As for the fruit of the gardens it is never sold, but any person may go into a garden and eat what they please, without the least obstruction. Strawberries are the only scarce fruit, and the only one that is attended to more than another, they are very large, many of them being near four inches long, and three broad: they are of three colours, red, white, and yellow. At the end of autumn the grape harvest begins, as does the making of wine, of a most generous

kind. There is such vast store of grapes, that a far greater quantity of wine is made than can be disposed of: the Indians drink it to excess, for when they once begin, they never leave off till they drop down, and some of them never to get up more: the wine being so very strong, the fumes overpower the brain in such a manner, that they are not unfrequently stifled by it. The best kind is the muscatel, which, though it looks nearly like water, yet in the stomach it is like brandy; these white wines are much esteemed, as are those of the grapes, called uva torrontos, and alvilla; the red and deep-scented wines are made of the ordinary red grape, and the one called mallas. The bunches of the latter are most commonly so very large, as to be almost beyond belief: we had one brought to our convent last year, as a present from a gentleman to the shrine of our lady, which was so big as to fill of itself a large basket, and fed the whole of the brothers for that meal, and they were pretty numerous, our community being the largest in St. Jago. The branches of these vines are stout, and the body of great thickness; they are not trained upwards as in Europe, but are suffered to run along the ground.

The riches of Chili are of two sorts: first, those which nature has bestowed on it, without the help of human industry, and, secondly, those

which have been produced by the inhabitants. To the first belong its mines of gold, silver, copper, tin, quicksilver, and lead. Of the copper of Chili, are made all the great guns for Peru, and the neighbouring kingdoms, in the garrisons of which, and in particular on the coast, are great quantities always in store. All the bells of the churches, and family utensils, are of this metal; so that, since the working of these mines, no copper has come from Spain, they being so rich in vein, there is more than enough to supply all the kingdoms of the Indians. There is little lead worked, and quicksilver less, because the mines are but lately discovered: for as they were going to work them, the obstacle to the working of those of Guancabilla, in Peru, was removed, which put a stop to the working of those in Chili. Those of silver likewise lie unwrought, because the golden ones are worked with much less charge; therefore, every body concerned in the mines turns their industry to them. They are so many and so rich, that, from the confines of Peru, to the straits of Magellan, there is no part of the country, in which they have not been discovered by those gentlemen, whom his Majesty was pleased to send out, to examine the mountains: and it is generally received, that in all the Indies, no gold is so pure and fine as that

of Valdivia, in Chili, except the famous mine of Carabya.

The gold mines are far more easy to work than the silver, as the silver is first dug out of the hard rock, which is very difficult, as is also the grinding the ore in the mills to powder; then a great expense attends the quicksilver, which must be used in the progress to make it unite, besides the long operation requisite to refine it, all which causes a great deal of cost and trouble. Thus the advantage of getting gold is evident, as not attended with such variety of labour; for, in most cases, there is no other trouble than to carry the earth, in which it is found, to the water mills constructed on purpose, where a stream is turned on, and carries off the earth, whilst the gold being heavier sinks to the bottom; this simple process is followed only for the gold found in a loose state, incorporated with the earth. Sometimes a vein of pure gold is found in mass, which they are obliged to dig for silver; but this does not always answer the owner's expectation, unless in following the vein through the rocks, they chance to meet a soft part, where the gold vein has power to expand; this they call *Boldu*, and, whenever met with, sufficiently repays the labour and pains they have been at to obtain it. There is now much less gold found than formerly, by reason of the continued wars the Spaniards

have so long had, with the nation of Auracanos, but still some is found particularly in Jaquimbo. During the winter, when the rains fall heavily, great masses of rock are washed away, and an easy passage is opened to the veins of gold: there is likewise some obtained in the territory of the Concepcion, but this is found by the Indian women in ponds or small pieces of water, at the foot of a mountain, which is seldom deeper than two or three feet: these ponds the women go into without any thing on their feet, where they keep puddling with their toes till they feel the grains of gold, which they take up perfectly free from sand or dirt of any kind; and when they have found enough to supply their immediate wants, they seek no further, but retire perfectly satisfied, being not at all a covetous people, like the Spaniards, who never think they can get enough. I brought with me to Italy one of these grains of gold, found in this way of a pretty good size, which I sent to Seville to be assayed; and without putting it in the fire, or any other proof, it was found to be twenty-three carats of very pure gold.

Now that peace is made with the Auracanos, and these warlike Indians are quiet, the Spaniards will, it is most probable, return to work the Valdivian mines, which are supposed to be very rich. As for the produce made by the industry

of the inhabitants, it is in particular in the breed of their cattle, as I have observed before.

Tallow, hides, and dried flesh are sent to Lima, where the inhabitants take as much as is requisite for their own district, which is about twenty thousand quintals of tallow every year for that city only, and hides in proportion; they distribute the remainder all over Peru: the hides in particular are carried to Potosi, and all that inland tract of mines; they are also sent to Panama, Carthagena, and the rest of that continent: some of this trade extends itself also to Buenos Ayres, Tucuman, and from thence to Brazil. The second, no inconsiderable product, is the cordage and tackling, with which all the ships of the South Seas are furnished; also the match for the great guns in all the garrisons from Chili. The hemp which makes the first material of all these provisions, grows no where on this continent but in Chili: pack-thread is also exported, and smaller cordage. The third product is mules, which are sent to Potosi, through the desert of Aracama. The fourth product is cocoa-nuts, almonds, and other fruits, which grow not in Peru; these are sent thither to very great advantage by the merchants, so that a single venture is sufficient to set up a young beginner. When I came to Lima, I was surprised to find that anni-seed, which had been bought in Chili for two pieces of eight, sold at

Lima for twenty, and the cummin-seed bought at twenty, was sold at four-score. Such great returns, induce merchants to trade thither, in hopes of getting rich in a short time. The gains made by this kind of traffic are so considerable, that a man who has about forty thousand crowns to employ in land, flocks, and slaves to take care of them, may every year have a revenue of ten or twelve thousand crowns; which is a gain of twenty-five per cent, without risking the danger of the seas; but those who will run the hazard of that element, gain much more; for the merchants, by many commodities get an hundred and two hundred, and even three hundred per cent, in a navigation of about three weeks, which is the time usually employed in sailing from Chili to Lima, without any absolute danger; for it is very seldom that any storms occur in that voyage, or at least such as might endanger the loss of the ships or cargo. The greatest danger proceeds from the covetousness of the merchants or owners, who, trusting to the calmness of those seas, and sailing all the way from Chili to Lima, before the wind, generally load up to the mid-mast. I have seen them myself, go out of port with provision for the voyage, and other necessities as high as the ropes, that held the mast: and although the king's officers are present to hinder the vessels from being over loaded, yet they are

generally so deeply laden, that the gunnel is scarcely above water; and yet with all this trade the warehouses are always full of goods, for the country being so prolific, there is always enough left behind to supply another Lima, and another Potosi. It is upon this foundation, the universal opinion has been grounded, that no country in America, has a more solid establishment than Chili: for in proportion to the increase of the inhabitants in Peru, Chili must increase too in riches, since it is able to supply the greatest consumption, and yet have enough for its own population, in all kinds; as corn, wine, oil, cattle, salt, fruits, vegetables, wool, flax, hides, tallow, chamois leather, ropes, wood and timber, besides metals of all sorts, medicinal drugs, and amber.

We have no silk, and it is to be wished it may never come hither, on account of female extravagance; not but that the country is as well adapted for the cultivation of silk-worms, as any part of Old Spain, for the mulberry trees are as fine and much larger, and more plentiful; therefore should any person bring hither any of the eggs of the silk-worm, I am persuaded they would thrive well, and be more productive than in Spain. The wax likewise comes from Europe, though there does not want bees in Chili, that make both honey and wax; but they are not domesticated, and breed only in the woods. All

the East India spices are imported into Chili, yet there is a spice that would supply the want of them, and there are in the Streights of Magellan, good cinnamon and other trees, that have a very fragrant smell in their bark, which tastes like pepper, but of a more quick flavour.

In the whole kingdom of Chili the herbage and fishing are in common, as also the hunting ; and the woods supply every one that chooses with timber and fuel, and the same liberty is granted at the salt mines ; every one may take what he pleases. There are no duties on trade throughout the kingdom ; every one is free to export or import what he pleases, which enables the merchant to make such great profits on his merchandise : this, added to the facilities of nature, renders Chili the most desirable place for those who wish to mend their fortune by trade and commerce, in the whole world ; and could the merchants or others be brought to live within bounds, they might in a very few years make princely fortunes : but extravagance and folly to appear more rich than they really are, makes many beggars, who, with a little economy and foresight, might have been in reality what they pretended to be ; but it is no use to reason with such ; the folly of the women will always prevent the salutary effects of good counsel.

Of the Volcanos incident to the Cordilleras.

THERE are, in this chain of mountains, sixteen volcanos which, at several times, have broke out and occasioned most alarming effects to all the country. Among the rest, that which happened in the year 1640 was the most terrific of any that had been known since the discovery of this country by the Spaniards : it broke out in the enemy's country in the territory of the Cacique Aliante. It burst forth suddenly, having been preceded by a tremulous motion of the earth, and continued burning with so much violence, that the whole top of the mountain cleaving in two, sent forth such immense masses of burning rock, accompanied with the most dreadful sounds, which were heard many leagues distant : on this occasion all the women that were with child miscarried, from the alarm that the day of judgment was come, and nothing was uttered but cries and lamentations, with people flying in all directions to avoid the threatened evil. This volcano has continued ever since to burst forth at times, but never with a degree of violence equal to its first eruption.

The first is called the volcano of Copiapo, and is in about twenty-six degrees of the altitude of the pole, about the confines of Chili and Peru.

In thirty degrees is that of Coquimbo. In thirty-one and a half that of La Ligua. In thirty-five and a half that of Peteroa. In thirty-six and a half that of Chilau. In thirty-seven and a quarter that of Antaco. This is succeeded by that of Notuco in thirty eight and a half. That of Klarica is in thirty-nine and three-quarters. A short distance from this is another bearing the same name, and in forty-one is that of Osorno, and in less than a quarter of a degree that of Guanahuca, and in a little more than forty-two degrees that of Quebucabi. There are two more in forty-four; and last of all, St. Clement in forty-five and a half. These are the present known volcanos in Chili Proper. There are a great many, it is supposed, that extend through the district of Terra del Fuego, but of these I have no certain knowledge, therefore only speak of those within the kingdom of Chili. It is not only the volcanos that raise our wonder in that great chain of mountains: the multitude of rivers that have their rise in them still increases our astonishment, as it is computed there are not less than two hundred which derive their sources entirely from them, and are of a most surprising breadth and depth at their fall into the sea. Another cause of admiration, is the short course these rivers run, not exceeding thirty leagues in length from their source to the ocean. The first of these beginning at the confines of Peru, about the

twenty-fifth degree of latitude, is called the Salt River ; on its descent from the Cordilleras it takes almost a western course, through a deep valley, to the sea : its waters are so extremely salt, they cannot be held in the mouth for a moment, without occasioning severe vomiting. The next to this is the river of Copiapo, in twenty-six degrees : it runs twenty leagues from east to west, and makes a bay at its entrance into the sea, which forms a good and safe harbour for ships. In twenty-eight degrees the river of Guasco does the same, and forms a port. Next to this comes the river of Coquimbo in thirty degrees : it forms a fine noble bay whose banks are adorned with myrtles, rose trees, and many other plants of great beauty, and serves as a shady grove for the inhabitants to walk and recreate themselves : it has a most noble appearance for its great length and breadth, for it extends from the town quite to the sea-shore, far surpassing in beauty all the works of art : along the banks the inhabitants frequently amuse themselves in taking the tunny fish, which abounds in it.

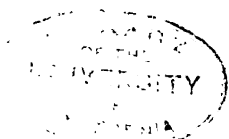
The next rivers to Coquimbo, are those of Tongoy, and Lemari, about thirty degrees and half east, and then in thirty degrees the river Chuapa empties itself into the sea. Upon that coast there is found a very delicate shell fish called Jacas ; between the one and thirtieth and

two and thirtieth degree, the rivers Longotomo, and La Liga enter the sea, and about thirty-three degrees that of Aconcagua, which is the great river that comes down by the Cordillera: this is very deep, and although it runs through the large valleys of Curimon, Aconcagua, Quillota, and Concon, which valleys are cultivated, and produce wheat, flax, hemp, and many others that require much irrigation, yet this river arrives at the sea as full and deep, as if it had not lent its waters to fertilize the grounds through which it runs.

About thirty-three and half, follows the celebrated river Alaypo, known beyond others for its rapidity and depth; the current is so very strong the whole of its course, that it has been found impracticable to lay a bridge over it. It is likewise subject to sudden and impetuous rising, inundating the country, and carrying down every thing that attempts to resist its fury. It is therefore passed by means of large cables joined together, fixed by a windlass on each side: its waters are generally thick and muddy, and the force with which it enters the sea, causes it to make repeated circles, by which the seamen distinguish it from any other on the coast. Its waters are brackish, yet the sheep fed on its banks, have a most delicious flavour; as have the fish caught in it, they being esteemed above

all others. There falls into this river among others, that of Mapo, otherwise St. Jago, which is divided into several rivulets, that surround and water the city of that name, not far from thence it hides itself under ground, leaving a bridge of pasture over it, for two or three leagues; when it springs up again among a grove of cherry trees, with waters so extremely clear and purified, that it looks like crystal. At this place of its second birth, stands the noble convent of St. Francis of the Mountains.

The river of Poangue, which falls also into Maypo, runs also many leagues under ground. This river cannot rise again with more brilliancy than it possesses at its course, where the water is so clear, delicate, and sweet, that it is coveted by every one to drink. This river derives not its source from snow-water like all the rest, but from the gold mines, through whose veins it makes its way. The water is considered medicinal in all stomachic complaints, where it runs above ground: its course is bordered on each side with beautiful trees and flowers, that form a most delightful walk. It does not become useless when lost to the light, for in its subterranean bed, it communicates its blessings by vapour; for though in the summer, there does not fall any rain, and the ground can have no other watering, yet it



brings as fine crops as those that have the help of rain and other irrigations: nor have I seen any where larger or more delicious melons and corn than in this valley. There are two other rivers that fall into the Maypo, which are called De Colina and Lampa, and, uniting together about ten or twelve leagues from their source, form the famous lake of Cuadagnael, which is deep enough to float some of the largest ships of war. This lake is about two leagues long, and one or more broad: its banks afford the most pleasing shade, being planted quite round with ever-greens and other plants; and that nothing might be wanting to amuse as well as delight the eye, and charm the senses, it abounds with beautiful trout and the fish called vagres, which, at times, are in such great plenty, that they are easily caught; for this purpose, the citizens of St. Jago make frequent parties of diversion to go fishing in the lake, which is very amusing. I have seen large quantities taken in a very little time. There are other lakes, as those of Aculco, which empty themselves into this river of Maypo, on the contrary side to that of the clear river. There also breed in it smelts of a foot long, the very name in Spanish signifying a royal fish. In some years there is such plenty of them, as to supply the whole city during the time of Lent, without buy-

ing any other fish, such as the sea fish, which, though very good, do not attain the delicacy of those taken in the river.

Next after the Maypo is the river Rapel, and not at all inferior to the other: it enters the sea about the thirty-fourth degree, and as many minutes; about four or five leagues before the two famous rivers of Cachapoul and Pingueritica join together, and are no less rapid and dangerous. Among others of great rapidity, are the rivers Maltua and Chambaronigo; on the banks of the last, the Order of the Redemption has a Convent, the Jesuits have also a Novitiate; and they have for neighbours a Monastery of St. Dominick. The lands there are extremely fertile, with most excellent pastures for the fattening of cattle, which are much valued all over the country. In thirty-four degrees and three-quarters is the river Delora, which receives those of Tino, Petesroa, and Mataquita, whose stream is so very rapid that many perish in it. These rivers water most rich lands, forming a delicious country for the breeding and fattening all sorts of cattle; for which cause there is not a single foot of ground unemployed in all the district. The great Maul appears in thirty-five degrees, and it forms the limits of the Archbishoprick and Jurisdiction of the city of St. Jago. All that is comprehended between this, the Rapel, the Cachapó, and the Pinguitica, was called

by the native Indians Promocacs; a place of dancing and delight, to express the pleasantness of that country. I remember once, that travelling in this country, when I came to a farm of any Spaniard, he would entertain me with nothing but the praises of it, so that I thought it could not be excelled: but when I came to the next, the owner would enter into so many particulars of the pleasures and advantages he enjoyed, that, I was brought to think but indifferently of the one I had seen before; and therefore, before the end of my journey, I could not but regard the whole as one great and most desirable district. Partridges abound here, as do all sorts of game; and, for fish, such as smelts, trouts, and other river fish, no place in the world can exceed it.

The river Maul receives the Clear river, and that of the Cauquenes, and though it be as deep again as either of them, yet, it is less dangerous for passengers, and fewer people are drowned; because near the sea, and the yard for building the king's ships, it spreads itself and allows a wide passage over it; where the king has a ferry, for the convenience of all passengers.

The Austin Friars have also a convent here, and take care of the Spaniards and their Black and Indian servants, who people all the banks of this river, and are very numerous, living in sepa-

rate farms all along the country ; these they call Estancias.

Next we enter the jurisdiction of the city of Concepcion, where the governor resides, and there is a garrison of militia. The Bishoprick of the city of Imperial, begins also at this river, which has in its immediate vicinity, the river of Itata, three times as large and as deep as the Maul, and enters the sea about thirty-six degrees; its course is among rocks, for which reason it renders but little service to the land; as the farmers cannot convey it over their ground; so that there is no kind of irrigation used in any part of its course. They pass it upon rafts made of any light materials, but there are fords in several places.

About the middle of its course, the furious torrent of the Nubla joins it, and washes the walls of the city of St. Bartholomew, of Chillan, where is an ancient garrison of the Spaniards, who have here often given singular proofs of their determined valour, when attacked by the Indians; which has very frequently and unfortunately happened. Indeed they are hardly ever free from assaults of the roving Indians, who come upon them in such a sudden manner, that they are obliged to go armed to the church, for when the soldiers are at mass, the Indians generally seize that time to attack.

Next to this river is the spacious and agreeable bay of the Conception, into which the slow and silent river Andalien empties itself, at thirty-six degrees and three quarters. There is another small river that passes through the middle of the city, having first precipitated itself from a high rock which gives a stimulus to the industry of the inhabitants, by furnishing sufficient water to turn several mills; besides, it amply provides water for the gardens, which are every where on its banks, that are edged the whole length with myrtles and orange-trees, and here and there with fine laurels.

Two leagues further from this bay, in the thirty-seventh degree, the much-admired Biobio enters the sea. It is the most powerful river of all Chili. At its mouth, it is near three miles over, which is considered very great on account of the short course it runs. The waters of this river are remarkable for their medicinal qualities, which it obtains by means of a small river that falls into it, that has its source, and for nearly the length of its course, passes, amongst sarsaparilla roots. These, it is supposed, communicate their medicinal virtues to the waters, which are proved to be a cure for many infirmities. There is a tradition, that at the source of this river, there were many very rich mines, worked before ever the Spaniards came into these parts. This tradition being

reported to Don Monso de Sotomayor, president of the country, he sent a party of soldiers to examine them, which they did ; but, on their return, they were laid wait for by Indians, who set upon them so fiercely, that but few returned to give an account of their journey.

This river forms the boundary that divides our Indian friends from our Indian enemies. In winter, the river rises and overflows its banks; so as to render the roads impassable, and prevents the enemy from crossing it at the fords, which gives the soldiers a respite till the spring. They therefore betake themselves to garrison quarters, and the enemy to theirs in the mountains, to which they always retire as to a fortress. The Spaniards have several garrisons or forts along this river, which they are always obliged to keep well supplied with men and ammunition, in order to bridle and keep in awe their potent and proud enemy, who alone has given them more trouble than all the rest of America, and never, I think, will be subdued.

The chief places of strength, besides the cities of Conception and Chillian, are those of Arauco and St. Philip, in which there are, in general, from one to two thousand native Spaniards, besides the numerous Indian allies. The fort of Arauco is situated near the sea, commanding the entrance of the river, and that of St. Philip,

a few leagues from the Cordillera. There are several smaller ones on each side the river : these two principal ones, and nine others, it has been found necessary to erect farther in the enemy's country, which are thus named. St. Angol, the Nativity of St. Ann, St. Rosondo, Good Hope, Talmacahuida, St. Peter, Colcuta, and Levo. These fortresses are all provided with artillery, and a sufficient number of soldiers, and built at such convenient distances from each other, that one being attacked, by firing a signal gun the whole range is put upon the alert, either to assist their neighbours, or defend themselves. The company of Jesus has here two residencies, one in Arauco, and the other in the fort of Good Hope, from whence they also make their attempts, not against the bodies, but to save the souls of their enemies.

After Biobio, follow four others, but much inferior to it. They are the rivers Colcura, Arauco, Labapu, and Levo, which last empties itself near the thirty-eighth degree ; and somewhat further that of Relimo, which a short way from its source is named Coypo. In near thirty-nine degrees, the pleasant and peaceful river of the Imperial enters the sea, having previously incorporated with its waters the river called the Ladies, on account of its quiet current. Nearer its source, it receives the two rivers of Curarava and Cyon,

which, before they meet to enter the river Imperial, form the beautiful lake of Pureo, celebrated as being an unconquerable fortress of the Indians, who are more secure in it than the Spaniards in any of theirs. About half a degree beyond the river Cauren, which is the same as the Imperial, the river Tolten pays its tribute to the sea, and is deep enough for large ships to anchor. About eight leagues further, the river Queule does the same, which, though small, yet barks (small coasting vessels) make it their port. It is about nine leagues upon a north and south line from the famous river of Valdivia.

The river and port of Valdivia, never enough extolled by foreign writers, and universally admired by those who have seen it, had its name from Pedro de Valdivia, first governor and conqueror of Chili. It is, as it were, in the centre of the whole kingdom; in about forty degrees of latitude, south-west of Seville in Spain, upon a plain map one thousand nine hundred and seventy leagues measured by the heavens. The sun is five hours and a third part of an hour in passing from the meridian of Seville to the meridian of Valdivia; so that when it is noon at Seville, it is in Valdivia six o'clock and forty minutes in the morning: its longest day is about fourteen hours. This river has its opening to the north, and, from its depth, large ships are enabled to get

close to the city, although it is between two and three leagues from the sea, so that they lade or unlade close to the merchants' houses, having no occasion for boats. Over-against the city is the fine island of Constantine, with two smaller ones; one before, the other behind, the island. The river is navigable on both sides the island, but the south branch, having a greater depth of water, the large ships come in by the south, and the smaller by the north branch. There are two points of land like rocks, which mark the entrance of this river; the biggest is to the north, and is called Bonifacio's Hill, the south is less, and called Goncalo's Hill. When you are entered some way up the river, there is another straighter passage, termed the key of the port, or rather ports, for there are several harbours within. This entrance also has two hills, which come so near each other, that I have heard a captain who was sent to sound the river relate, that in the middle he was within musket-shot of either hill. That to the south is called Moro de los Mancanos, and that opposite Moro de Niera; So that, according to this account, there might be laid a chain from one to the other, with which, and two forts, the entrance might be made impregnable. As soon as this streight is passed, there is, on the south side, a noble port; for, though all the river might be called so, from its

calm state, yet this is more advantageously situated from being land-locked by the adjacent mountains. It is called the port of the Corral, and forms a bay, capable of receiving large fleets. When you have passed this port, there appears the first island, between which and the land, on the south side, there are many shoals and sands, on which account the ships enter on the north side, and passing between this island and the great one, pursue their course to the city by the channel of the largest island: the lesser vessels may, without danger, enter by the other side of the island. This port has other advantages, by being placed in the centre of a most fruitful country, producing all sorts of the finest corn, and every kind of fruit but grapes, which do not ripen so freely as in other parts of Chili, so that no wine is made here, but it is sent hither from other districts of Chili. It affords, however, great plenty of beef and mutton, venison and fowls of every description. It has, also, wood for ship-building, and that which is esteemed above all, the richest mines of the finest gold in Chili, nay, in all America, as there is not any can compare to it but the gold of Carabaya.

This city was founded by the governor Valdivia, in the year 1552, upon a rising ground, on the side of a hill, much above the rest of the coun-

try. Historians say, that an Indian lady, named Ruloma, was the principal means of procuring for Valdivia a quiet possession of this rich territory. The story is thus related.—The Spaniards had advanced as conquerors thus far into the fertile land of Chili, but, when arrived at this river, they found a most formidable army of Indians in battle array, covering the opposite shore with their numbers, and determined to oppose the passage of the river. The Spaniards had made several unsuccessful attempts, in all which they had been driven back with great loss, and any other than Valdivia would have relinquished the attempt; but he ordered his men to renew their efforts, which, as they were about to execute, an Indian lady, of considerable power, came to the governor, and requested him not to think of again forcing the passage, “Stay here,” she said, “and go no further; I will put all this province into thy hands, and make thee lord of all thy eyes can discover. I shall go, but stay for my return here, and go not a step further, nor suffer any of thy soldiers to pass on.” The governor promised to obey her command, and pledged himself to shew the kindest treatment to all the Indians that would submit to his God and his king. Thus being assured of peace, the lady alone threw herself into the river, and swam to the opposite shore, which, having reached, she

assembled all the chiefs around her, to whom she made a long and very animated speech, which so affected the Indians, that they, one and all, declared themselves ready to accept any terms the Spaniards might think most advisable to propose. With this answer, the famous Ruloma returned to the governor, assuring him of the most peaceable possession he could desire, and all the Indians immediately submitted to him. He accordingly crossed the river in safety, and took possession of the richest country in the world. Here Valdivia immediately founded the city, the Indians aiding him in all things, and giving every thing he desired for its establishment: but this good understanding did not continue long. The governor, however, began to seek for gold, instead of peaceably establishing his city: all his care being to procure the precious metal for Spain, to prove to his majesty the rich country which they had conquered. The river next to Valdivia is named Chalben: it is deep, and capable of receiving large vessels: from this river to a place called the Punta de Galera is about two leagues, and from this to Rio Bueno seven, into which fall five rivers more, which form the bounds of Valdivia. After this is the Rio Chico, which comes from a lake at the foot of the Cordillera, in which lake are baths to cure leprosy and other infirmities. Next to this is the Rio de la Bellena,

close to the cape of the same name, so denominated from a whale of prodigious size, which came ashore, and died upon that part of the coast. After this, you come to the archipelago of islands, into which falls the river called de Los Rabados, on account of an Indian nation of that name. More on to the south is the river de los Coronados, named so by the company of a ship, which put in there on the day of the Forty Martyrs so called.

After these are many rivers all along the coast ; the first is called De la Esperonso or of Hope, because of the wishes that one day the light of the Gospel may reach to those parts by means of the ministers of it. The second is named Rio Sin Fundo, or the river without a bottom, because of its great depth. The third is called the Gallegas, from a Spaniard, who sailing along the coast, was drowned near the shore, and, like another Icarus, gave his name to it, as also to the cape of that name. Then follow the rivers de los Martyres, and de los Apostles, and immediately after them two others, one of them not named, the other is called de los Gigantes, or of the giants, because on the banks of this river a very tall race of men have been fancifully supposed to inhabit the province of the streights of Magellan. The famous river called de la Campana, enters at a place called El Aucon Sin Salida : this name was given to the river be-

cause its two arms seem to form the shape of a bell. There are two rivers more before you come to the streights; the first is named de los Paxaros, or of birds, on account of such numbers being found on that part, which runs towards the streights; and the other of St. Victorian, called so from the opening to which the same saint gives its name; as for the other rivers that run among the islands I shall speak of them when I come to treat of the islands. Those which I have already spoken of, run from east to west, and empty themselves into the South Sea. Those which run from the opposite part of the Cordillera, towards the North Sea, are not so well known, because those parts are not so well inhabited, at least by such as can give us a good account of them. There are but two of any consideration that are known, and these empty themselves into the celebrated lake of Guanache:

Besides the rivers and springs of the Cordilleras there are many fountains of most excellent virtues: among others, that which rises at the foot of the great volcano of Villa Rica, with such force that it springs into the air many feet, and with such a body of water at each source, that it forms at a short distance a pretty considerable lake. In another lake from which the river Rio Chico derives its name, there rises a fountain of hot water which is a never-failing cure for the leprosy and other

cutaneous distempers ; there is another remarkable spring in the lake Maguey which has two mouths close by each other, the one sends forth very hot water, the other equally as cold ; these two assist each other by tempering the baths for the afflicted who resort in great numbers to them, cutaneous diseases being very frequent in that neighbourhood. The baths of Rencagua are likewise much frequented for the same distempers ; and, being near St. Jago, where the greatest intercourse of the kingdom is, are more sought after, and more numerous frequented. There are many others in different parts of the kingdom possessing great medicinal virtues. Among the fountains, that of Rhaynon is the most celebrated for the abundance of the water it affords, being sufficient to irrigate the surrounding fields, so that the farmers never feel the want of rain. At about two leagues to the eastward of St. Jago, is another very remarkable one, that of Carren, which does not throw up its waters, but bubbles out of the earth in a beautiful meadow or valley, about six leagues in length, through which it runs, not in one particular channel ; but, spreading itself over the earth, makes it so very porous, that any one jumping quick upon it, the earth appears to shake all around him. The valley retains its verdure all the year round, producing a kind of grass like trefoil, which the inhabitants eat in

spring and autumn as we do water-cresses. The next is the fountain of Mayten, which rises about midway between the two last, and is remarkable for having its water most cold when the weather is most hot: it affords an excellent sweet water, deriving its name from a tree so called, of surprising height and bigness, its branches spreading to an astonishing extent, and, what adds to its beauty is, a large smooth table of rock, at the foot of which, the tree expands, affording a delightful cover to those who resort hither to enjoy its shade, and partake of collations which many people provide to entertain their visitors and others. This tree is evergreen, something like a myrtle, but of much stronger scent, and a more lively green. The fountain runs at the foot of the tree, having its source a little higher up, from whence it runs, in gentle murmuring, over pebbles, and among small shrubs and flowers of the finest scent, which make it altogether a most enchanting spot.

The fruit-trees in this valley, though wild, produce very fine fruit of various kinds; particularly the cherry, affording such immense profusion, that the boughs are weighed to the earth: also, the apples, which I have seen drop off in such abundance, as to stop the course of a large stream. To add to the pleasure of those that resort thither, there are great quantities of

singing birds, whose harmony never fails to rejoice the hearers. There is also a delightful prospect for many leagues, both of cultivated and uncultivated lands: though to look at them in prospective, one would imagine the whole was one great garden, the uncultivated lands being as profusely decorated with admirable flowers, especially in the spring of the year, as any well regulated garden; so that among the vineyards, and plowed lands, the uncultivated part is as admirable to look on, as the most curious person could wish or desire.

The green meadows mingle in this scene, with the waters of the river Mapocho, which is seen distinctly at this distance; at one place quietly in its bed, at another divided into several streams, and softly gliding over the fields and meadows, to fertilize and enrich them: at length the prospect is terminated by several farms called chacras, and their churches. In the midst of this delightful landscape, about two leagues distant, the city of St. Jago opens to the view, and in clear weather, the bells are distinctly heard. This district abounds with many more springs, all affording very excellent water: that which is to the north of the city of St. Jago, named Conchalli, is likewise much spoken of. It rises in a little valley called the Salto or Leap, from the fall of the river Mapocho, which flows in the plain to a certain

place, where it has been divided by art into two branches; the largest of which runs in its natural bed, the lesser is conducted by channels to water the valley. The western part of the valley is level, but the eastern rises considerably, and through which the river runs, making about three miles from the high ground to the bottom, where the river falls, forming several very romantic cascades, owing to many pieces of rock, and other obstacles that it meets with to obstruct its descent. Not far distant from the fall, it unites again into one stream for a short way, and then is divided again into many streams, to water and cleanse the city; after which it again unites, and empties itself into the sea.

It is very remarkable, that, although this last valley is but half a league from the city, fruits of all kinds ripen sooner by a month than in the gardens of St. Jago. It also abounds in game, such as partridges on the high ground, and various wild fowl in the ponds and lakes; indeed it is the most delightful place for pleasure and recreation that can be met with in any district. I shall not repeat the number of fountains, since they are too numerous for particular description. Those alone of Concepcion, Arauco, and the country which borders on the warlike Indians, would be sufficient to fill a large book. Of all these springs, none are so much esteemed as

those that are farthest from the Cordilleras, which must be owing to their long course that naturally purifies them, as they may partake of the qualities of the ground, over or through which they run. At the same time, I cannot help remarking one which is in the Novitiate of the company of the Jesuits, in Bucalemo, whose waters are not to be equalled for their delicacy and softness, being to the touch like new butter. This fountain springs in a little valley, under some hills, about a league from the sea: it bubbles up in a white sand, in which gold is found very frequently, and it appears as if it had fire under it, to keep it boiling. If you throw any light matter on it, its motion instantly increases, and continues so till it has swallowed up what has been thrown on it, and then it returns to its former gentle bubbling. The effects this water has on the stomach is very great: it helps the digestion, dissolves crudities, and phlegm, and evidently prolongs life, especially in old men.

The old Indians attribute their good state of health to this spring, which is the only remedy they take in all illness: for as soon as they find themselves ill, they set off to this spring, and drink as much at one time as they can possibly take, and, as fast as that evacuates, they take more, and so continue repeating the draught till they are cured; the Novices also do the same as

the Indians, and find the beneficial effects. I have conversed with an old gentleman who was near an hundred years old, that could ride, and walk with the same agility as a young man. He assured me, that this spring alone had prolonged his life, and given him such health and spirits as was most surprising to every one that saw him.

Of the Lakes of Chili.

I SHALL speak first of the lake of Tagataguas, which is found about fourteen leagues from that city, and was once in high esteem for the fish caught in it, and wild fowl taken on it; but it is little resorted to now by any but Indians. The lakes of Villa Rica, are much the same. The lake of Purcu has been famous for its being the grand fortress of the warlike Indians, all of whom are our enemies. They have for many years maintained the most sanguinary war with very powerful armies of Spaniards, who have sought in vain to dislodge them from this impregnable fortress. Here they have always found a secure and safe retreat, whenever they had any encounter with the Spanish force, it being so well fortified by nature and art, that they rest here in perfect security, and bid defiance to any enemy.

The sea lakes are numerous, and of great advantage to the owners, whose lands border on them; these fisheries are more secure and certain than the sea, and are always sure of a good market for their fish during Lent.

The lake named Rapel brings to its owner a very great revenue, it runs in length two leagues, or more, within land. In the winter, the sea is joined to it, for, in all storms, the sea is driven in with such violence, that it appears as the sea; but when the storm subsides, and the waters retire, they leave behind vast quantities of fish, which, added to those that breed in it, make it more than enough to supply the markets for the whole year, all through that district, not only with fish, but very fine salt in abundance. About January the sea begins to retire, and the sun is at the greatest degree of strength in that climate: the water then rapidly congeals, to sometimes more than a foot thick, which when taken off and grated, makes the purest white salt, and of a most excellent flavour. It is not of an equal thickness every year, but when it is most so, the people gather it and lay it in store, so that there is never any want; add to which, great numbers of salt pits are made, and they seldom fail.

Since we are treating of salt, I will relate what I myself have seen in the valley of Lampa, which is about three leagues from St. Jago. In that

valley grows a small herb or shrub, I know not under what class it comes, not altogether unlike sweet basil, only its leaves are not so green, but inclining to an ash colour: it rises about a foot above ground, and is covered over in summer with small grains of salt like pearl, which is congealed upon its leaves, either by the dew of heaven, or some vapour raised by the sun, from the earth; or else the nature of the herb is such, as to exude this humidity, which, afterward being congealed, is converted into salt: let the cause be what it may, the effect is seen no where but in this valley, and upon that species of herb only. It is much valued by the Indians, the salt of it being more saveury and of a much finer flavour than any other. I cannot tell whether Johannes de Laet means this plant, in his description of the new world, or not; for having mentioned the kingdom of Chili, to which he gives the preference, he says, in that kingdom, in some of its valleys, there falls, at certain times of the year, such a dew upon the leaves of the plants, that it is like sugar. Several other authors speak of this dew, but I know not whether it is the valley of Lampas they mean or not, if it should, they could not possibly have tasted the congealed dew; if they had, as I have often done, they would not all of them have been so egregiously mistaken, as to say salt was sugar.

I will not say, it is impossible, that in one district the same kind of plant should yield sugar, and in another salt, but I never met with any but the salt.

Of the Sea of Chili.

It is well known that all the coast of Chili is named the South Sea, because it is towards the Antarctic pole, from whence generally the south wind blows, in an opposite point to the Tramontana, or north, which reigns in the ocean as far as the arctic pole.

In Chili, we regard the south as a favourable wind. The north with us covers the heavens with clouds, causes tempests and storms at sea, and makes all the land dark and gloomy. The south, on the contrary, makes the sky serene and clear, and the sea in perfect harmony. Then, again, the south wind, in the north sea, causes the same tempestuous weather as the north wind does with us, whereas, when the north wind begins to blow, it is soon quiet and at peace, and fine weather immediately ensues. From hence it proceeds that in South America, the south wind reigns in summer, and the north in winter, when it is most commonly subject to

sudden and violent tempests : it invariably brings sudden and heavy showers of rain, and squalls of wind, called Tornados, which sometimes are dreadful, and cause great destruction in other parts of America more than in Chili, in those parts in winter where the sky is clear, and the weather altogether fair. It is when the south wind overpowers the north, for the south wind in those parts is cold and dry, which is an infallible sign of fair weather. In short, these two winds cause quite different effects in Europe and America : a well-known difference is, that to go from Europe to the Indies, the north is the proper wind, and carries us rapidly before it, and, consequently, is contrary to our return. From whence it proceeds, that a voyage from Spain to Carthagena, being by the north sea, is made in thirty, forty, and fifty days, and the return to Spain most commonly lasts from fourscore to a hundred and more days. On the contrary, in the South Sea, the voyage from Chili to Lima is made in about a fortnight, and as much more to Panama. The return only from Panama to Lima takes up two months, and from Lima to Chili forty days. The South Sea is also called the Pacific Sea to distinguish it from the North Sea, where storms and tempests are so frequent. Whereas in the South Sea, they are rare ; but, in my opinion, the difference arises from another

cause. The most frequent navigations of the South Sea are from Peru to Panama, and, from thence to New Spain and the Philippine Islands. Those from Peru to Chili are less used: by which it appears, that the best part of the South-Sea navigation is between the tropics, where the sun has so much force, that it keeps the winds, as it were, with a bridle, and therefore prevents those lasting storms which are so severely felt without the tropics, and in parts nearer the pole. For this reason, the sailors, in these warm climates, where there is little or no winter, called this sea the Pacific, from the general good weather they experienced in it. The reverse of this is in the North Sea, where most of the navigation is without the tropics; where the sun, having less force, the winter predominates, and causes those dreadful storms so often experienced. The Europeans, who first navigated the South Sea, being such as had been only acquainted with the tumultuous North Sea, when they found, under the line, so calm a sea, and in those parts most frequented, such as New Spain, Panama, and Peru, they gave it the name of Pacific, without examining any thing relative to causes and effects. But had they tried that very South Sea without the tropics, they would not so readily have assigned it the name of Pacific. All those that have experienced the hardships suffered by navi-

gators, from the twenty-sixth degree of latitude, on the coast of Chili to fifty-three degrees, will admit my reasons to be just; for there, as soon as the winter begins, the sea cannot be navigated without danger; the storms being in no ways inferior to the worst in the north; and although, at that season, it is not so dangerous to sail from Chili to Lima, because they every day get into a less latitude, yet, from Peru to Chili, it is extremely dangerous, not only because they come into a greater latitude, but go out [further to sea, to avoid the south winds, heavy fogs, and dark misty clouds, that cover the land in such a manner, that not without the utmost danger, do they make their port, not being able to discern the rocks and shoals that every-where menace them.

What I have just said, relates only to those coasts of Chili that are in the least latitude; for, from the city of the Conception, even in summer, they are dangerous, and the ships that are bound for the islands of Chili have not above two or three months in the year to go in and out with safety; therefore, if they are not able to avail themselves of that short period, they must inevitably put by the voyage to the next year. This is to be understood as far as forty-four or forty-five degrees, in which this archipelago of islands is placed; for, from thence to the streights

of Magellan, those can best tell the danger who have passed them. They will all have enough to discourse of at their return. Therefore, we may say, that the title of Pacific does not properly belong to the South Sea, speaking of its whole extent; but only to those parts with which we have at present the greatest intercourse, as they being within the tropics, are freest from storms; and yet the South Sea has many advantages over the North, by being free from the great sand shoals so common in the North Sea about Carthagera, the Havannah, and other islands; nay, even in the channel of Bahama, which indeed are so many, that, let a storm be but moderate, they increase greatly, so that sea-room is much lessened, and the sailors are always heaving the lead to avoid a shoal or running upon rocks which are every way visible from the ships. Antonio de Herrera, in the fifth decade of his General History, folio 319, relates the motive Magellan had to call this the Pacific Sea: because there is not, in all that element, a more spacious career for the winds; and as there reigned between the tropics so steady and strong a levant, that in many days' sail, the seamen need not hand their sails, nor the steersman his helm, sailing through those vast seas as in a canal. He further adds, that this motion of the wind proceeds from the course of the first mobile,

which is proved by its perpetual invariability, and the increase of its vehemence, as it draws nearer the equinox. Some dispute may arise whether it ought to be called a wind, or an impulse which the air receives from superior orbs communicated to them by the first sphere; which to me appears very feasible, and the reasoning of Herrera is certainly clear and demonstrable to those who have frequented those seas.

The most famous port in all the coast, besides that of Valdivia, which we have already described, is that of Ququnerbo, a bay where ships can, in all weathers, ride secure. To which may be added, the delightful country round it, which is not surpassed by any. The product of this district is mostly gold and copper, which is carried from thence to Peru. The copper is used for the artillery, church bells, and household furniture. The ports also of Copiapo and Guasco are thought good, but there is not much trade to them. The port and bay of Pacudo is not known much to any but the domestic traders: it is a private secure bay, almost encircled round, so that nothing but the entrance is visible: hither the ships from Peru come to load with the hides and tallow of Chirapa, as also with tar and tackling for ships, which is made in that valley, and is esteemed whiter and better than any in Chili. The next is the port of Coucan Quillota, where

the product of these valleys is embarked. A short distance from thence is the famous port of Val Paraiso, where are landed all the goods brought for the city of St. Jago ; from whence they are distributed all over its territory, and, as far as Cuyo and Tucuman. This port daily increases its population ; it being the port of the greatest commerce with Peru. It is distant from St. Jago twenty-four leagues of level country, and good roads, very well disposed for land carriage, by which means all the different commodities of both kingdoms are exchanged. Near the port of Val Paraiso is that of St. Antonio, which is also very safe and good, and is at the mouth of the river Maypo : there is a mistake in authors about this, for they place the port of Val Paraiso at the mouth of a river, which they make in their maps to come from St. Jago. This is a very great error, because at Val Paraiso there is no river of any note, but only springs and fountains which rise out of the rocks, close by the sea, from whence the ships take in their water, as it is a more pure body than any thereabout, and invariably keeps better at sea. There are several other ports between that and the Concepcion, but none of them much resorted to, as all the valleys from Maul to Quillota send their produce by land to Val Paraiso. All the product from Maul upwards is carried to the harbour of the

Conception, as it has the best bay on all the coast. At its entrance is placed the island of Quiroiquina, under which, as in a mole, ships ride in the greatest security amid the most violent storms. At the entrance of this bay is the port of Le Herradura, or Horse-shoe, it being in that form ; and, opposite to it, is that of St. Vincent ; and a little farther, that of Carnero, called so, for the refreshment it afforded to one of the ships belonging to the bishop of Palencia, who, by order of Charles the Fifth, passed the Streights of Magellan with six sail : and, having lost their pinnace, was forced to the Maluccas. Next to these are the ports of Perva and Quedal. Le Beachica, Purralla, St. Cebrian, Sancta Clara, St. Domingo, St. Estevan, Los Reyes, Biexas, and the Innocents, and many others of less consequence, as far as the Streights of Magellan.

The Inhabitants of Chili.

THE Indians of Chili are represented, by all that have written of them, as the boldest and most valiant warriors of all the vast extent of the New World. It were to be wished by us, that this had not been confirmed by woful experience ; for then the kingdom of Chili would have been the most flourishing kingdom of the Indies.

Though the Spaniards subjected in so short a time those vast empires of Mexico and Peru, yet nevertheless they have not, in the space of one hundred years, been able to subdue the Indians of Chili, sons of the great Cordillera, from whence they seem to borrow their untameable strength and fierceness. Their universal love of liberty has always been a barrier against their having a king, as those of Mexico and Peru; nor have they ever been subject to one only form of government or commonwealth. Their warlike temper did not permit them to have patience enough to await state debates necessary for the union of so many minds; every family, therefore, chose one among them to direct; from this arose the caciques who are the sovereigns among them, whose power is hereditary, and their children enjoy it with all its rights. But though every cacique governs independently his own district, yet, when the safety of all is menaced, there is immediately a meeting summoned of all the caciques and elders of the people, men of talents and experience in war*. In these councils, they debate and resolve what they think best for the general good: if it be a case of war either offensive or defensive, they choose their general, which is never one of the most noble of the caciques, or the most powerful, but him that has the fame

* See Frontispiece.

of being the most valiant and most successful against their enemies. As soon as he is elected, all the people, as well caciques as others, pledge themselves to obey him in all things ; which they never fail to observe with the most scrupulous fidelity. When the general is chosen, the debates on the occasion are always held in the open air, and a general assembly of the people is appointed for the next day, in order that every one that chooses may give his opinion respecting the business. This done, the most pleasant plain or meadow that the district affords is pitched upon for the grand assembly to meet in. Thither they send an incredible quantity of provision, and great store of chicha, a strong liquor which is their wine. Being assembled, they first eat and drink ; that done, and being warmed by their liquor, which greatly inflames their martial temper, one of the most ancient of the assembly, who has been appointed to open the business of the meeting then rises : with great eloquence, for in that they are very famous, he announces the business of the meeting, makes use of all the rhetoric he is master of, and declares the motives that require their opinion, which every one is at liberty to give, and the majority of votes carries it. The result is immediately made known by the sound of drums and trumpets. But though the result is decisive, yet every one is

allowed three days to reflect and consider deliberately on what has been proposed; after which, if they find no reason to retract their opinion, the execution of the business is immediately set about, and nothing suffered to impede or protract it. By such wise counsel and steadiness in action, the Chilian Indians defended themselves against the conquering sovereigns of Peru, who, many times before the Spaniards came among them, had endeavoured to bring these brave people under their dominion, but were always repulsed and driven back with shame to the confines of their kingdom, notwithstanding the Peruvian sovereigns had brought immense armies of regular and well-disciplined troops, against those who had nothing but valour and bravery to oppose. They had neither fortresses, walls, or fortifications of any sort; and yet these brave people constantly succeeded in compelling their powerful enemy to disgraceful retreats.

But it cannot be wondered at, when we consider the martial temper of the Chilians, and the early care they took to make even infants acquainted with their art of war. As soon as a child is strong enough, they put him to run up the side of a steep hill, among broken pieces of rock, giving him that does it best some prize or reward. This kind of exercise makes them very light and quick of foot, possessing remarkable

agility. I have myself seen them at their feasts and entertainments run two and two for wagers with wonderful swiftness. Those who show no disposition for this exercise, are set apart to follow day labour. The active they reserve for war, not suffering them to follow any other employments, but to attend to their arms and their horses, that they may be expert in every part of their exercise. To these they assign their posts, according as they have behaved themselves in any affair in which they may have been engaged ; and, they have, in this, no consideration of birth or power, intercession of friends, or any other motive, but the proof they have given of their conduct and courage in the hour of battle. The arms they use are pikes, halberts, lances, hatchets, bars, darts, arrows, and clubs ; as also strong nooses to throw upon a horseman, and several kinds of slings. Their horse fight with lance and buckler, which they have learned from the Spaniards. Among them the pike-men may not be an archer ; neither can any that bear the club make use of any other weapon.

In forming their battalions, every file is above an hundred mén : between every pikeman are archers, who are defended by the pikemen. Each file advances with their shoulders close to each other, and in very close columns ; so that if the first battalion falls, the second instantly advances ;

so that the Spaniards can never be certain whether any have fallen or not: for they advance in such close order that they resemble waves of the sea, without any void space or interruption. No man changing his step in advance but by death, and which is instantly replaced from column to column to the rear line. They always endeavour to have some bog or lake not far from the scene of action, to which they may retreat, if compelled to seek it, which, whenever that happens to be the case, is always effected in a most masterly manner. When they raise any forts for their defence, they are composed of great trees interwoven with each other, leaving in the centre a place of arms. Round the fort they dig a deep ditch, in which they fix sharp stakes to destroy the enemy's horse. They march to the sound of drums and trumpets, and their arms ornamented with a variety of beautiful colours, and themselves with helmets adorned with plumes of the richest and most striking colours. The other parts of their dress are equally striking, which, added to their martial air and handsome persons, make altogether a most goodly sight, more especially when they are advancing in order of battle; then the effect is great indeed, even to those that are accustomed to them. They have, at the head of every battalion, a certain number of volunteers, who always march

in advance, trailing their pikes, and haughtily challenging the commander of the enemy to single combat. When they draw up, and are ready to engage, silence is commanded ; when their general, for they never have but one, advancing in front, and raising his voice, addresses them in, as near as I can recollect, the following harangue, as I once heard it :

“ We are now going to encounter our enemies. The glory of victory, or the never-ending shame of a defeat are now before us. Take notice, there is now no medium between these two extremes. Are not you the sons and grandchildren of those brave men who have fought so many battles, and ventured all to defend that country and liberty for which we now fight ? Shall we own that they exceeded us in bravery, or that the enemies we encounter are superior to those whom they overcame ? Had they less motives than we have, or do we hope for less glory ? We must all die, and, in the equality of that common fate, the only difference is dying nobly for our dear country, and the liberty of our wives and children. Therefore, arouse that courage you have inherited from your ancestors, who never could endure an infamous yoke of slavery upon their necks. Courage then, brave men, as brave as any the sun beholds. Courage, for in that lies victory.” With these, and similar expressions,

calling to their recollection some of their former victories, they advance to the attack, with so much resolution and fury, that it is scarcely possible for any battalion, however brave or disciplined, to withstand the shock of their first onset. The war-shout has something in it very appalling to an European; indeed it not only confounds the men, but the Spanish horses are affected by it; not unfrequently has the Spanish army been thrown into disorder by it; of this the Indians immediately take advantage, and rush on with the most uncommon intrepidity, into the midst of their enemies, so as to fight hand to hand, by which means they frequently render useless the whole of the Spanish artillery, they not being able to turn them upon the Indians, without endangering their own people; under these circumstances it is dreadful, the slaughter which the Spaniards have but to frequently sustained.

The warlike spirit of this nation, proceeds from their natural temper, which is choleric, and impatient, proud, arrogant, and fierce. They are strong, and robust of body, well proportioned, large shoulders, high chests, well set in the limbs, nimble, active, vigorous, and nervous, courageous to excess, enduring with the utmost patience, hunger, thirst, heat, and cold: despising all domestic comforts, setting no value on their lives,

when put in competition with their liberty, which they will hazard, in the face of the greatest dangers, to preserve it, being considered by them as the only good. They are constant in their resolutions, and persist in any thing once begun with incredible steadiness. They are excellent horsemen, and, upon a single saddle cloth or without one, they will set as firm as Europeans on war-saddles: they will ride down the side of a precipice, as if they were goats, with their bodies as straight and as firm as if they were nailed to the horse: they are not troubled with much store of baggage: when they are on a march, every man carries with him his provisions, which consists of a small bag of flour of maize, a little salt, some guinea pepper and dried flesh; a small calabash, in which, when arrived at a spring, they open the flour bag, and wet a little with the water, and that serves them for drink; when they put more of it with a little salt and pepper, they call it Rabel, and sometimes they eat the maize dry, with slices of dried flesh. Thus very little is required to fit them for a long march. At the time of the Spaniards' arrival among them, the population of Chili was very numerous. They had no regular built cities or towns, for they cannot even now bear any formal constraint, but love to live free in the fields, some in one valley, and some in another; some at the foot of moun-

tains, others on the side of rivers ; some by the sea-side ; all just as it pleases or suits their inclinations ; but all under no other form of government than the will of their cacique, to whom they uniformly yield the most prompt obedience. Their houses are generally of wood, of only one floor, but divided into several apartments, each apartment constructed by itself ; so that when they have a mind to remove to another situation, they carry away the house by a room at a time, which about twenty men can easily effect. They first clear the ground about it on the outside, and then with a cry of Yo yo, they take hold of the posts, and lifting it altogether they easily carry it away : their doors are of the same materials, but they have neither hinges or locks ; their security consisting in each other's fidelity, which they sacredly observe toward each other ; their furniture is very simple, nothing more than necessities, which they cannot do without, as all superfluities are despised by them. Their beds are made of skins of beasts, taken in hunting, a pillow made of a piece of wood covered also with skins, and one or two coarse coverlets : lately, however, they have taken to have hammocks ; they have no utensils of gold or silver, though they have so much in their country : their dinner service consists of a few earthenware dishes, and wooden spoons or sea shells, a calabash or gourd to drink

out of, and the leaf of a tree for a salt-cellar: this is all the apparatus of their table, which is generally a low bench, without a table-cloth, and only a small bunch of herbs on which they wipe their hands. Their food is very simple and easily cooked: it consists principally of maize, variety of fruits and herbs, with gourds or beans: also fish and the game they hunt, particularly a species of small rabbits, named degues. At their grand entertainments they provide great quantities of beef and mutton, of which, since the coming of the Spaniards they have great abundance: for bread they eat maize boiled in water, in the same manner as rice: their drink they make of the maize baked first, then steeped in water for a certain time; after which it is boiled, and set by to settle, and when fined, is fit to drink: this is their common beverage, but at their feasts they have other sorts, as in Europe.

Their way of making flour is very different from ours; they first bake their maize in large earthen dishes, or put the dishes on the fire full of sand, which remains till it is burning hot, when they take it off, and put the maize to the hot sand: they then stir it about very fast, with a small broom, and continue putting in fresh maize, till they have toasted the quantity they desire to make into flour. This they effect by

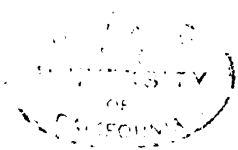
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grinding it between two stones, one of which is made hollow, about a foot and half diameter and fixed in the ground: the maize being put into the hollow stone, the women take another stone of equal bigness, with the one fixed, but of an oval figure; this they turn round very quickly with their hands, and thus grind the maize to flour. There is a small opening made below for the flour to fall from into a trough: and it is very surprising how the women only accomplish this business, for it appears to require the strength of a man, yet the woman will contrive, in a very short space, to make flour enough for her family, and her husband to take with him on any expedition, either of war or otherwise. The men never attend to any domestic affairs, they consider it as disgraceful, therefore the poor women are all exposed to very laborious and wearisome employments; yet they seem to execute all with great cheerfulness and alacrity, waiting on their husbands with as much attention as if they were their slaves; indeed they are never idle, but always occupied.

Their manner of clothing themselves is very simple; they have no linen, nor do they put on one garment over another as we do. The dress of the men consists of a pair of short drawers, very wide, but reach no further than the knee; with a kind of waistcoat or shirt, which they call maun: it is composed of about a yard and half

of woollen stuff, not sewn together, but left open about eight inches: through this opening they put their head. The body is girded with a broad fillet or band, something like a girdle; on their feet they wear a kind of half boot with leather treads, but the leg part made remarkably neat with wove grass, so close, that neither water or cold can penetrate. They wear on their heads a sort of turban, composed of several circles of wool, with long fringe, which they stir or pull off in token of respect, for those they converse with; none but the caciques, or aged men, wear on their head more than one circle of wool; neither do any wear them close on the crown of the head; that part is only shaded by the fringe. This dress, simple as it is, has something in it very agreeable to the eye, on account of the various and beautiful colours, with which is dyed the wool: nothing, indeed, can surpass it. When the men go from home, they put on a chami, a kind of cloak or mantle, which they fasten on their breast; this part of their dress imparts an air of elegance to the wearer; but neither their arms or legs are covered. Their ball dresses and those worn at their feasts, though cut after the same fashion as their ordinary clothes, are far more striking, they being wove of finer wool and more rich and brilliant colours. They wear round their necks chains of small shells; these necklaces are termed

naucas: their head ornaments are feathers and humming-birds, which they neatly fasten to the fringe of the circle of wool: the panaches of feathers are generally of bright red, white, or blue, and never less than from sixteen to twenty inches in length. Their way of dancing is with little jumps, and a step or two, not rising far from the ground, nor capering; they move altogether in a ring, holding each other's hands, round a pole, which one of them retains in the middle as a standard, round which are set bottles of wine: of these they every now and then take, poured into a large calabash: but they do not drink alone: he that begins, drinks to his neighbour; then he who has drunk, pledges his next friend, and so the cup goes round, till it is empty: and this they continue for a whole night, dancing, drinking, and pledging each other, till, at length, they are all drunk; and then they lie down upon the ground, for it is an invariable custom with them never to leave drinking as long as they can stand. Their flutes which they play upon in those dances, are made of the bones of the Spaniards, and other enemies whom they have killed in war: this they do by way of triumph for their victories, they make them also of the bones of animals, but the Indians of war, dance to no other but those of their enemies. Their way of singing is to raise their voices altogether, upon the same



wild note, without any difference in parts or measure; at the end of every song, they play upon their flutes and trumpets, just as we do upon our guitars; this they repeat so often and so loud, that they are heard at a great distance; for at their feasts they are very numerous. Those who are not engaged in dancing, sit together in parties, and take wine, and talk of past occurrences; but it sometimes happens that over their wine, they will recollect past injuries that have not been revenged. Whenever this occurs, they get up, fall a fighting in good earnest, and frequently kill one another for a mere trifle: but to prevent such an affair as much as possible, the women are constantly upon the watch, for they never dance with the men. When as soon as they notice any symptoms of anger rising they straightway interfere, and if the men are not too drunk they succeed in keeping peace.

The women as well as the men have their arms and feet naked, but no other part; their dress is a long woollen robe fastened on the shoulders, with no linen underneath; this robe reaches to the ground, and is gathered in round the waist in large plaits. They are swathed from the breast to the bottom of the waist, with a fine coloured wool scarf, about four inches in breadth; which, by passing it round the body several times, keeps the

women as straight and shapely as the finest stays. This composes the whole of the women's dress within doors: when they go abroad, they put upon their shoulders a mantle, which they fasten on the breast with a clasp of the same form as those on the shoulders. They wear nothing on their heads but their long hair plaited, and hanging down in various ways behind their shoulders: the front has it parted on the top of the head, which they bring forward to their eye-brows, leaving two small locks on each cheek.

The Indian women of the better sort that live in town, among the Spaniards, have learned the use of linen, and waistcoats under their robe, but they cannot be brought to adopt any other part of the European dress. To attempt to put any thing upon their heads or arms, would be to affront them, for they hold in abhorrence every thing that differs from their ancient customs. This manner of clothing themselves never changes, and of course fashions never vary, of which the Indians have not the smallest notion. Such is the simplicity of their household furniture, and every thing pertaining to domestic life, that they cannot be supposed to have much business for artificers of any kind, and of course they must have a greater number of soldiers, the character to which they all aspire, as the being a soldier is their sole pride and ambition.

They do not imitate other nations in the splendour of their palaces, furniture, riches, arts, or learning ; of all which the Indians never had the least idea ; and yet they possess abilities to attain any knowledge, as may be gathered from seeing those Indians who belong to his Majesty : with what readiness they will learn any thing they are directed to know ; and, when taught, whatever it may be, they execute it with such correctness and perfection as surpasses an European. Although they can neither read nor write, yet they are very dexterous at keeping accounts, which they do with their quipoes, a sort of line of different bigness, in which they make knots of several colours : by these they will keep as regular an account of any thing committed to their care, as though it were written in a book. With these alone they will give an account of a considerable flock of sheep,—will tell when and what number have been used by the family, what by the shepherd, whether any died of sickness or casualty ; and with every particular that happened upon any occasion, and what was done or said. When they go to confess, these quipoes serve them to remember their sins, and tell them with distinction and clearness. They have, besides, excellent memories, and will relate things of long standing with as much accuracy as if they had been done but the day before. To prove the

care they take to keep the memory of remarkable occurrences, I will relate what I learned from Father Diego Torros Bollo, a very excellent man, both for holiness of life, and skill in government.

This great man, returning from Rome, whither he had been sent as procurator of the province of Peru, to found the province of Quito, he saw in a place where four ways met, an Indian, who, to the sound of a drum, was singing a great many things all alone, in his own tongue. The father called one of his company who understood it, and asked him what that Indian meant by the action and tone of his voice. He answered, the Indian was the register of the country, who, to keep up the memory of what had passed in it, from the deluge to that time, was bound every holiday to repeat it with the sound of a drum and singing, as he was then doing: he was moreover obliged to instruct others in the same way, that there might be a succession of men to do the same thing after he was gone; and he was at this time singing, that, in such a year, there had been there a white man, called Thomas, preaching a new law which in time was lost and forgotten. By this you may see the means by which the Indians supply the want of books and writings. The women of Chili partake in the courage of the men, for, on any emergency, they

take arms, and fight as bravely as the bravest. The women play likewise at a very active game, called *la chucca*, wherein the men shew their greatest agility and quickness. Each side striving to get a ball from the other, and carry it to a mark with crooked sticks. They are about forty or fifty on a side, who place themselves in different posts, so as readily to assist each other to drive away the ball from the opposite party ; and when it happens, that two of different sides are engaged together, it is a pleasure to see them run, the one to forward it with another stroke, and the other to get before him, and hinder him from striking it, that he may drive it back to his own side. This is a very agreeable sport to witness, and therefore has many spectators to see the end of the game, which often lasts a whole evening, and sometimes is forced to be put off to another day. Such vast contention there is to win the prize, which is given by their caciques, without the smallest partiality either to man or woman. I have myself seen a party of women win two prizes successively, their play being adjudged as superior to that of the men, and therefore deserving superior reward. This game the Spaniards are very fond of seeing.

The strength of the women arises from the little tenderness in which they are bred : they never avoid either heat or cold in the severest

winter; they wash their heads in the coldest spring water, and never dry, or even wring their hair, which is always very long and thick; but leave it to dry itself in the air. As for their children they are washed in the river or fountain every day, even when they are infants, and that at all seasons of the year. There is likewise very little care taken of the women when they are brought to bed, for they are commonly about their usual avocations in the house in the course of a couple of days.

If the women are thus hardy, what may not be supposed of the men. I have seen them in the severest weather, with nothing more on them than the simple habit I have described; their head bare, without hat or any other covering, in the most tremendous showers of rain, which absolutely drenched them, and then they laughed, and thought nothing of it. By these means, they are so hardened, that with a wound for which a Spaniard would keep his bed, they go about their ordinary occupation, without giving it the smallest attention further than to wash it with cold water, and then apply herbs to it. But this is much owing to the strength of their constitution, which is their most effectual physician in distempers as well as wounds.

From this strength of body springs the admirable patience of their minds, and the little

sense they show of that which, amongst us Europeans, would be a most aggravated evil. These Indians of Chili are the fairest of all America; but I do not remember ever having seen one with light hair, all, both men and women, have uniformly black, and that very rough, hard, and thick. By this peculiarity, the child of a Spanish man and an Indian woman are easily known, for, it is not till the second and third generation that the hair softens. With this exception, there is very little difference between the Spaniard and the Indian, either in their voice or manner of speaking, or in shape or feature; and, as for the language, not only the Mestizos, but the Indians bred among the Spaniards, are as ready at the phrase and turn of the Spanish tongue as any of the Spaniards. The good constitution of the Indians hinders them from feeling the effect of years as Europeans; they do not early turn grey, for, till threescore or thereabouts, they look like young men. If you see an Indian with grey hair, or any baldness, you may then guess him to be about a hundred years of age. Both men and women, but particularly women, attain to great age, and have the happiness to retain their memory unimpaired to the last, even to remember all the particulars of the early days of their infancy. They seldom lose either their

sight or their teeth. In short, all the infirmities incident to old age comes to them much later than to other nations. But yet, if they go out of their country, they presently lose all their vigour, and become infirm; as we experience daily in our prisoners of war, who, being sold as slaves to Peru, as soon as they feel the heat of the tropics, they fall sick, and most of them die. This, indeed, is no more than what happens to the Spaniards, when they come from their mother country to Porto Bello, or Panamá. Nay, the Spaniards born in Chili risk their lives when they go to those countries that are between the tropics. From the experience which the Indians have of the hotter countries, proceeds the great reluctancy they always shew to go out of their own; and the resentment they express against those who carry or send them from their home. It is not to be imagined the strange and rash contrivances they have to make their escape from Lima, for though they have above five hundred leagues to reach their own homes from Peru, yet they undertake the immense journey, and most commonly succeed through dangers and difficulties that would soon destroy an European. They are obliged to keep their course by the sea-side, that being their only guide. To what toil and danger they must every moment be exposed, since they are obliged to compass all the bays,

and double all the capes, besides the many rivers and other waters they must pass over, and that without food or clothing; nothing to support nature, but what shell-fish they may meet with on the shores, and often, perhaps, without being able to obtain a drop of fresh water. But all this the Indian overcomes by time, and the most unsubdued patience, and reaches again his beloved country. He thinks nothing can be of such value as liberty, or that it can be too dearly purchased. Such is invariably the fortitude of the Indian.

They solemnize their marriages in a very contrary manner to that of the Europeans, for as to the portion, the woman's parents do not provide it. The man is obliged to give a portion for her, but neither of them reap any advantage from it, as it becomes the property of the maiden's father. They take many wives, and the greatest obstacle to their conversion to our religion, is this vice of polygamy, which they practise without the least constraint, thinking it the surest sign of power and greatness. The first wife has some pre-eminence over the others, and can command them to do as she requires: yet they all look upon themselves as lawful wives, and their children as legitimate: yet the son of the first inherits the estates, enjoys the honour of cacique, and has a power over his brothers. The subjects

obey their lord with great punctuality, love, and respect. They, therefore, have no rebellious subjects, and need no prisons, nor is there among all the Indians a single place of confinement. The natural love and respect they bear their cacique is a law inviolable in their hearts, which they constantly shew upon all occasions. When a cacique has a reason to make war, he need not make provision for pay or any other concomitant. He need only issue his orders, and they immediately repair to his standard, properly equipped with arms and horses, bearing their own charges during the whole of the expedition. By arrangements like these, the caciques are always enabled to assemble a large army at very short notice, for they all consider the common cause as their own, and they make the good of their country the motive to arm. They think themselves amply rewarded, if they can defend that from their enemies. The sound of the drum and trumpet is the only signal necessary to call them to the standard, and to conquer or die their only motto. In the distribution of the booty and slaves taken in war, there is no other method adopted, than that every man is at liberty to keep whatever he can get, so that the bravest and most active are always best provided, without being obliged to give any part of it to his general; for, except the general that leads them,

they are all equal, valour alone making any distinction, which they always show in an eminent degree, whenever they are opposed to the Spaniards, being constantly upon the watch to gain some of our guns, swords, or lances, as they have no iron of their own. When they return from war, and find how many men they have lost, the lamentations and cries of the women are beyond belief; but though this method of expressing grief be a common sentiment of feeling among all nations, yet the Indian women certainly surpass all others.

When a man dies at home, the manner of expressing their sorrow is still more remarkable, for the women all get about the dead body, and the eldest beginning, the others follow in the same tone of voice, screaming as loud as they can; and thus continue their lamentations without ceasing, till they all are exhausted, when they drop on the ground with absolute fatigue. This noisy ceremony they preserve even after they are baptized, and live among Christians. They have also a custom of opening the dead bodies to know of what disease they died, and putting meat and drink and clothes into the graves, and every thing of value the deceased was fond of whilst living. When they have buried the dead, they raise over their bodies a sort of pyramid, to raise which every relative

carries to the grave one large stone, the eldest laying the first, and so on till it finishes in a point, which is placed there by the youngest of the family. But none of these last ceremonies are now practised by the converted Indians, except the weeping and lamentations.

I shall now proceed to give you some account of the first conquest of Chili. The Adelantado Almagro, being returned in the year 1537 to Cuzco, Colonel Pedro Valdivia, desired permission from the Adelantado Pizarro to pursue the conquest of Chili. He promised not to return till he had completed the subjection. The Adelantado had it in his thoughts to pursue this conquest, on account of the fame of its great riches; therefore, did not hesitate to grant the colonel the leave he requested, as he knew him to be one of the bravest captains that had come to India, and had acquired fame in Italy before he came to Peru. Pizarro immediately invested the colonel with full powers to complete the conquest of Chili in 1539. Valdivia lost no time in forming an army composed of Spaniards and tributary Indians of Peru; and, early in the year 1540, left Cuzco with a large body of men, and also a considerable number of volunteers; the fame of the riches of Chili having animated every one to this enterprise. The persuasive manners of Valdivia added not a little, for he was

a man of fine address. Their march was long and arduous ; while the severity of the cold, with hunger and thirst, greatly delayed their advance : at length, however, they arrived on the confines of Chili, and halted in the valley of Copiapo, which signifies the Turquoise, a beautiful blue stone, of which in this valley there is a large rock. The valley of Copiapo is the first of the inhabited valleys of Chili : the greater part of the population is Indian, there being very few Spaniards, but one of them which is the Corregidor, appointed by the governor of Chili. The land is of itself very fruitful, and is rendered more so by the advantage of a fine river that runs through it for near twenty leagues before it empties itself into the sea, in a bay which forms a commodious harbour. Here grow all the natural grains and fruits of the country, together with those of Europe. The maize yields above three hundred for one ; the ears of it being generally half a yard long : all other grain and fruits are in the same profusion. I am not informed as to the reception Valdivia met with from the Indians ; but we are led to think he did not encounter much opposition. They had, indeed, already seen and received Spaniards out of respect to the Inga Pauls, who had accompanied Almagro from Peru, at the time when that great man restored them their lawful cacique, and took the usurper

prisoner. On this account, it is presumed, they had the same facility in the valley Guasco about thirty leagues from Copiapo, and that of Coquimbo Limari, and as far as Quillota.

Here the Indians took up arms, and, for the first time, in a most gallant and glorious manner opposed the further progress of their invaders: But Valdivia, not at all disheartened, although he daily lost great numbers of men, yet, by the advantage of his cavalry, of which the Indians were more afraid than of the whole of his army, he still continued to advance, and penetrated as far as the valley Mapocho. He found this valley extremely well peopled, on account of its breadth, fertility, and pleasantness. The inhabitants, alarmed at the appearance of those strangers, as soon as they saw them about to throw up a defence as if they intended to make good their footing among them, instantly summoned an assembly of their caciques, in which it was decided to arm and drive the intruders back. They were prompt in the execution of their resolves; and attacked the Spaniards with great fury; but the Spaniards, by the bravery of their horse, succeeded in daily driving the Indians back, till they had raised a fort in which they could place their guns, and had fortified their camp. The governor, being determined to lay the foundation of a city, and make

good his lodgment there, as soon as the fort was finished, he began to mark out the ground; but his troops were disposed to murmur: for, although they saw the richness and fertility of the country, yet they were so much harassed by the Indians that they thought the conquest would be too dearly purchased, for they could not obtain even provisions, much less gold, but by desperately fighting for it: they therefore proposed returning to Peru. The governor Valdivia, though not ignorant of the difficulty of his enterprise, was, notwithstanding, encouraged by the hopes of success at last; and, by dint of persuasion and promises, he prevailed upon them to wait a little longer; at the same time, he sent off seventy men towards the river Cachapoal, to obtain provisions. During their absence, the Indians, as soon as they knew it, determined, with all their force, to attack the fort and entrenchments of the Spaniards; and they would have succeeded fully in their enterprise, had not Providence ordained, that the seventy absent men should return even at the moment when all the out-works had been carried by the Indians. But coming up at this critical juncture, they, with incredible valour, cut their way to the fort, and happily preserved it, driving back the Indians with great slaughter. This victory gave them new spirits, and the provisions they had also pro-

eured opened fairer prospects ; for the governor immediately took advantage of the defeat, and sent a messenger to the Indians, to propose terms of peace and accommodation, which, though long debated, was, at length, entered into. The Indians, upon stipulated conditions, agreed to let the Spaniards remain in possession of the ground they then occupied, to aid them with provisions, and to procure the governor as much gold as they possibly could obtain.

As soon as these conditions were settled, the governor lost no time in quieting his men, and reconciling them to the losses they had sustained. He set nearly twenty thousand Indians to work in the mines of Quillota, which produced an immense quantity of gold in a short time, but he found it soon necessary to build a fort at the mines to protect his men, and also to send to Peru for a reinforcement, as his troops were greatly reduced by the continual skirmishes in which they had been engaged. At the same time, he sent an account of the riches of the mines, and the fertility every where around him. This account, he presumed, would incite many to come and join him : and, to confirm it by ocular demonstration, he sent thirty-six of his people, in whom he could confide, laden with gold ; while every part of their horses' furniture, which used to be of iron,

he caused to be made of gold, the stirrups being very large, on purpose to display the plenty they had of that rich metal. But this design was frustrated, for, on their arrival at the valley of Copiapo, they were set upon by the Indians, and all but two were killed; these two were officers, named Pedro de Miranda and Mon Roy; they escaped by the aid of their horses, but pursued by the Indians, and their horses tiring, they were overtaken by an Indian captain of archers, his name Cateo, and were immediately conveyed to the cacique with their hands tied behind them. This cacique was married to the heiress of all the valley, as their inheritances follow the women for the security of the right line; but when the two captives were in expectation of instant death, it pleased God to inspire the cacique's wife with compassion for them; for she went herself, and untied their hands, and, commanding their wounds to be dressed, gave them cordials of the Indians to drink, having first drank herself, as a token of friendship and safety: she also bade them take courage, for they should not die. When these two brave men were thus restored, as it were, from death to life, they kneeled at her feet, and declared themselves ready to become her voluntary slaves, since, by her favour, they enjoyed a life which they had given up for lost.

They were six months in this captivity, but treated by the Indians with the greatest humanity and kindness; yet, notwithstanding this gentle usage they could not be happy. The natural desire they had of returning to their friends, and wishes for liberty, put them upon continual schemes to effect it. At length, they fixed on one, which, though hazardous in the extreme, they determined to accomplish, or die in the attempt. The cacique had been much taken with their horses, and frequently expressed a desire to learn to ride. The officers undertook to teach him to ride and manage the horse, and, for this purpose, they used to go to a plain at some distance from his house, the cacique always attended by a guard of archers, and one man immediately before, bearing a lance, and another behind with a drawn sword, one of those which had been taken from the Spaniards. Miranda and Mon Roy having decided on their plan, they took the opportunity, when the cacique was mounted, exercising his horse, one to seize the sword, and the other the lance, with which they slightly wounded, and dismounted him, and seizing each a horse, instantly mounted, and whilst the Indians were crowding with the utmost grief and astonishment round their chief, they effected their escape, and got safe to Peru, where, at

that time, they found the government in the hands of the Licenciado Vaes de Castro.

These two captains, were gentlemen of great families, and to this day the Mirandas, in Chili, are the flower of the nobility of that kingdom. As for the Mon Roys, they are so well known in Castille, that it is needless to say more of them than that they are great and noble.

They were well received by his Excellency, who was extremely satisfied with the news they brought; and considering it of the first importance to further the conquest, he sent succours thither immediately, as also arms, ammunition, and clothing for the soldiers, who were almost naked. Captain Pastene, a gentleman of an illustrious house in Genoa, who had engaged in the conquest of the New World, from the same desire of glory that prompted others, and to mend his fortune, was appointed to conduct these succours. He happening then to be in Peru, the viceroy selected him for the king's service, and sent him immediately to Chili to relieve the Spaniards there, who were reduced to great distress, owing to the continual assaults of the Indians; they were not only reduced in numbers but were confined to the fort of St. Jago, which they had much ado to keep possession of, it being the only shelter they had left. Herrera says, that with these succours which Valdivia received, he determined to make further discoveries; he

therefore advanced, with the aid of the people called Pramacaes: he was, however, compelled to fight his way both advancing and retreating, but having effected the object of his march, he returned to St. Jago, and sent back to Peru the general Pastene, to give an account of the further knowledge he had obtained of the country, and the warlike spirit of the inhabitants, which required still greater succours to be sent, in order to establish garrisons in every part where they might find it necessary to venture a settlement. Valdivia also found it requisite to found a city close to the mines, in the valley of Coquimbo, which he named Serina; this was the second establishment founded in Chili, in the year 1544. It is in a very pleasant and fruitful valley, abounding with every requisite necessary for the comfort and convenience of life; for it yields corn, wine, and oil, in abundance; cattle of all kinds, with fruit and grain even superior to Bosago. But that which the Spaniards value it for most, is the great abundance of gold, copper, and lead: so that although they have at this time given over the search for gold, in every other part of Chili, yet in this place they continue gathering it more or less as the weather is more or less rainy; for when it rains much, the mountains have the earth washed away, which leaving large fissures in the rock, the gold is more readily discovered and more easily obtained. Copper, like-

wise, is in such quantities as to be able to supply all the kingdom as well as Peru.

The governor Valdivia, having spent the year 1550, in peopling the city of the Concepcion, and defending himself in his fort and camp, against the continual attacks of Indians; at the same time, he informed himself more exactly of the country and its fertility, by means of captain Hyeronimo de Alderete, whom he had sent out to reconnoitre, as far in the country as he could without discovery: this business he happily accomplished, and brought back very satisfactory accounts of the country and the probable number of its inhabitants.

This important information being gained, the governor Valdivia determined to leave the Concepcion or Senna, and go on to pursue his conquests; therefore, as soon as the fort was well provided with all things, and leaving a good garrison, he set out in the beginning of the year 1551. He took his army by the plains of Angol, crossing first the great River Biobia, and continuing his march to the river Cauten, which, from its tranquil stream, is called the Ladies' River: here he found numerous settlements of Indians who had never before seen a Spaniard or a horse; the appearance, therefore, of those Spaniards on horseback, the noise of their fire-arms, and the being able to kill at a distance, together with the com-

plexion of the Spaniards, so different from their own, induced those innocent people to imagine they were Epunamones, or gods; that they were immortal and had power to send out thunderbolts like the Supreme Being; and when a piece of ordnance was discharged, they imagined it thundered, and that the balls were thunderbolts. But even, supposing the Spaniards to be men, they considered them to be Viracochas, or scum of the sea, sent by God to subject them for their sins. Thus they readily received them as messengers from God, and instantly supplied them with every thing they had to offer, and made signs that they were ready to obey them in all things.

This unexpected meeting with such vast tribes of peaceable Indians, induced the governor to found here the city of Imperial, as it appeared to be one of the most pleasant and fruitful districts they had found; being about four leagues from the sea and thirty-nine from the Conception, and a hundred and nine from the city of St. Jago, in thirty-nine degrees of south latitude. This city was the fourth that had been founded by the Spaniards, and being in peaceable possession of whatever territory they thought proper to fix upon, the governor divided it into lordships, and gave to each of his followers an adequate portion, that he might content all, and induce them to enter heartily into his views; he took for himself the lordship of Araeneo

and Tucapal as far as Puren. Thus having satisfied all, and placed a good garrison in the city of Imperial, he marched with his troops to the river Valdivia, where he found great numbers of Indians on the opposite side of the river, ready to dispute his passage ; nor would he have found it an easy matter to accomplish, had not a brave Indian lady interposed, whose name was Ruloma. She alone undertook to prevail on the Indians on the opposite shore, to permit Valdivia and his people to pass the river unmolested. This being effected, and not being much opposed by the natives, the governor here founded the city and fort of Valdivia. Whilst he was engaged in perfecting this work, he sent out Hyeronimo Adderita, to discover the country as far as the Cordillera Nevada, which he accomplished. He informed the governor that it being the richest he had yet seen, he had founded a town and called it Villa Rica, on account of the abundance which every where presented itself.

These were the cities founded by Valdivia, but they cost more blood to maintain them, than the conquest was worth, as it proved afterwards ; when the Indians began to find that their visitors were not gods, but mortals like themselves, and far more wicked, treacherous and deceitful. It was now discovered that their grand, if not their sole, object was the pursuit of gold ; to attain which they would trample with impunity on all laws, divine

and human, despising all treaties, and regarding the natives as herds of savages created only for their service, and to be slaves to their cruelty and avarice. As soon, therefore, as they found what the actual designs of the Spaniards were, and that the mines were the only objects of their pursuits, the Indians determined to rise unanimously and oppose with all their strength the further advances of such avaricious and cruel tyrants ; and from that period to this, they have never laid down their arms.

The climate of this city is certainly the most temperate in all the kingdom. The winter, which, in other parts, is, at times, very sharp, particularly nearer the pole, is here so gentle that it is hardly perceived. It is within five or six degrees of the tropic, and twenty-ninth degree of latitude, the longest day being fourteen hours on the eleventh of December ; the shortest day is on the eleventh of June, the night is then fourteen hours long. The accidental situation of the city also assists the general mildness of the atmosphere, being within two leagues of the sea, with an intervening, elevated plain, covered with myrtles, and commanding a fine view of the sea, which here forms a noble bay. This city was soon inhabited by many noble families, the founders being men of the first quality, and their descendants still maintain the lustre of their ancestors. The governor-general ap-

points the place of Corregidor, which is one of the most profitable, on account of the vicinity of the mines ; but notwithstanding all these advantages, it does not increase in population so fast as that of St. Jago.

About the time that general Pastene reached Peru to demand the succours requisite for gaining possession of Chili, he found the whole country in confusion, caused by the ungovernable spirit of Gonçalo Pizarro ; so that the parent government wanted relief itself, instead of sending it to the aid of others ; this was a serious disappointment to Pastene, to find the standard of revolt set up by the man who should of all others be the last to throw off his allegiance. Pastene was too loyal a subject to join Pizarro's faction ; he therefore determined to return immediately to Chili, and bring from thence all the force the governor could spare, which intention coming to the knowledge of Pizarro, he by stratagem got possession of the ship in which Pastene was to return, and his person into his power, in the hope that either by promises or threats, he might be able to prevail upon him to join his party. But Pizarro quickly found that Pastene was not to be wrought upon either by flattery or threats ; and while he was deliberating in what manner to dispose of him now he was in his power, Pastene found means to make his escape and to recover his ship ; when he immediately

sailed for Chili, not doubting but the governor and his principal officers would march directly for Peru, and join the king's forces that had not been seduced by Pizarro. On his arrival at St. Jago with this unwelcome news, the governor resolved to go thither in person to assist the king's forces, and take with him the flower of his own. As his Lieutenant during his absence, he appointed Captain Francisco de Villagia, a gentleman every way qualified for such important post, to govern and protect what we had already in that kingdom. He got together what gold he could, and hastened on board, with his officers and men, in the same ship commanded by general Pastene. When they arrived, they found Pizarro's force very considerable, and that he had put to death the Viceroy Blaseo Nunes Vela. The arrival of Valdivia with the force and gold that he brought with him soon changed the face of affairs, and recalled numbers to the royal standard; so that in a very short time, Valdivia's army was in a condition to force Pizarro to battle in the valley of Quiraguana, where he fell, together with the greater part of his associates; when peace and good order was thus restored, and Valdivia, with a considerable reinforcement, returned to Chili, with a determination of following up his former intended enterprise: but all the troops he brought with him, and the several reinforcements he afterwards received, proved inade-

quate to enable him to make head against the determined bravery of the Indians, who not only kept them from advancing, but, for six years together, reduced the Spaniards to the greatest extremities of hunger, cold, and nakedness, indeed to every kind of want and privation ; their principal food for a considerable time being rats and mice, and the herbs or roots that grew wild, so that many died for want of adequate sustenance. But still, the brave heart of the governor remained invincible ; he endured all the hardships in common with his men, still hoping he should finally succeed. Influenced by these hopes, his ardent mind did not relax from its pursuit, while any means were in his power to maintain him in it.

The governor Valdivia being once more arrived at St. Jago ; and finding the garrison tolerably secure, thought of nothing but pursuing his conquest, and immediately made preparations for his march, having mustered the succours he brought with him, and having relieved his garrisons, he regarded his force as strong enough to pursue his expedition ; he therefore set out with his new army, in the year 1550, and having passed with little opposition the deep river Maul, the wide Itata, and arriving on the banks of the Audalien, he found it a very convenient spot for his army to halt and refresh themselves : an encampment was accordingly formed, and finding after a few days, the situation

to be altogether agreeable, fertile and pleasant, the governor determined here to establish the city of the Conception. This city is in the latitude of thirty-three degrees and five and forty minutes to the Antarctic Pole. It is situated on a rising ground, and in a very temperate climate. For the security of this infant city, a large fort was hastily erected, as a place of refuge against the Indians, before whom the Spaniards were perpetually compelled to retreat ; for the Indians, impatient of any yoke, and enraged to think that strangers should dare to take possession of their lands, were determined to drive them thence. Uniting, therefore, against the common enemy, they resolved, if they could not dislodge them from their encampment, at least to keep them within it ; and this they effected ; the city, being now only a frontier town : for in spite of Spanish valour, prudence, and good management of the governors, the Indians have always proved superior, and kept the Spaniards from advancing a single league further into the country : in the course of so many years the city and the small portion of land within cover of the forts, being all the Spaniards have been able to maintain. Although it has not increased in proportion to St. Jago, it has many rich merchants residing in it. The traffic is in hides, salt, and cured beef for the army ; for on account of the hostility of the Indians

the mines in its neighbourhood have never been worked.

The Spanish children born here are of a sweet and docile disposition, and readily take to learning. The men are remarkable for their loyalty, faithful keepers of their word, steady in their friendships, to which they are ever ready to sacrifice their dearest interests. They have the best inclinations, and a universal inclination to virtuous pursuits. Those that have embraced a military life, are by every one allowed to make the best soldiers and most faithful subjects the king can boast. They are educated in great simplicity of manners, the corruption of a court having never reached them, so that their minds are uncontaminated with court vices, hypocrisy, and dissimulation.

The bishopric of this city is a poor one; its yearly revenue never exceeding two or three thousand pieces of eight. For this reason, though the land is rich itself, and abounding in gold mines, yet the decimes or tenths are very small, owing to the continual wars this city has had to maintain with the Indians ever since its foundation. Another cause of the small revenue of this bishopric is the loss of seven cities, some of them the richest in the kingdom, and all belonging to the diocese. Thus, the Indians have reduced it to an inconsiderable sum. In

the year 1567, there was settled here an high court of chancery, which remained, though in an unsettled state, till 1574, when it was removed to St. Jago, where it now is ; and, though its jurisdiction reaches as far as this city, there is little for it to do, because the governors are obliged to be upon the spot to be nearer the garrisons, on account of the continual and uninterrupted war : the garrison is therefore numerous, and never suffered to be idle. The general in chief appoints all the officers, even to the colonels ; but his Majesty nominates the treasurer and muster-master general, who is the second person after the governor. This is a post of great trust, and of no small value in Chili, by reason of the many hundred thousand ducats that pass through his hand in payment of the officers and men who are inrolled on his books.

As soon as the governor had received Alderche's account of the country whither he had been sent, he determined upon returning to the Conception for a short time, and thence to St. Jago. Before he left Valdivia, he placed every thing, as he thought, on a secure footing, and having settled all matters to his wish, he set out, returning to Arauco by Puren and Tucapel. He caused also three strong castles to be erected at the distance of eight leagues from each other, and in such situations as they might, upon the least

alarm, easily communicate with and assist each other. This being finished, and a proper number of men left in each, he went to Concepcion, and, from thence, in a few days, to St. Jago, from whence he despatched Alderche to Castile, to give the king a particular account of the discovered country, and the riches with which it abounded, and of the settlements made there, in order to obtain an adequate supply of men, which his Majesty readily granted. During Alderche's absence to Spain, the new-founded cities were in danger of being lost; for no sooner was the governor known to have arrived at St. Jago, than the Indians began to shew an impatience at the settlements made by the Spaniards in their territories. They could not but be offended at the strong forts the Spaniards had erected as places of strength to fly to on occasion, and at the cities they had founded; as they gathered from it, that the Spaniards, contrary to their engagements, meant to conquer their country, and enslave them. The Auracanos were the first to announce their determination to drive the Spaniards thence. The governor was soon informed of the movements of the Indians: he immediately collected a supply of men and ammunition, and marched at the head of them to the Concepcion, accompanied by Don Marten de Avendanno, who had, but a short time before,

arrived at St. Jago, with a body of recruits, mostly volunteers. The governor being arrived at the Concepcion, he relieved and augmented all the garrisons ; and put the whole in such a state of defence as he thought sufficient to protect them from all danger that threatened. He even turned his thoughts to the mines, for which purpose he employed above twenty thousand Indians, designing to collect as much gold as possible in a short space, with an intention to take it himself to Spain, to shew his Majesty the value of the conquest he had made, and to obtain from the king those titles of honour usually bestowed upon the conquerors of these countries ; and also to bring back with him a sufficient force to complete the conquests he had begun. For this end he did two things ; the first was to send to the Straights of Magellan, in the year 1552, Francisco de Ulloa, with two ships equipped on purpose, to discover the whole Streight, that he might know how to undertake his voyage to Spain that way ; the other was to set many Indians to work to find out more gold-mines, which they easily did, there being so many in those parts ; the most famous of which were the mines of Quilacoya, four leagues from the city of the Concepcion ; and others in Angol, to work which more than twenty thousand Indians were employed. It is easy to imagine the immense

quantities of gold procured, by such vast numbers of men, from mines that never had been worked before; it presently enriched both governor and soldiers; by which means, their minds were elevated in proportion, and the concomitants of prosperity soon made the soldiers grow wanton and insolent; even the governor became infected with the same disease of too much prosperity. The desire of riches increasing by riches, which they saw every day flowing in upon them, they became less attentive to what ought to have engrossed their most sedulous attention, which was their own and the infant state's preservation, and, by such neglect, paved the way for all the evils that shortly followed.

The acquisition of so much wealth soon made the Spaniards forget the blood which had been spilt to obtain it; they grew proud, arrogant, and tyrannical; they affected to despise the men that were labouring in the mines to procure the treasure for them, and, without whom, they never could have obtained it. But whilst these poor Indians were busy in searching the bowels of the earth for gold, to gratify the inordinate avarice of their enslavers, they were also employed in thinking how they should recover their lost liberty, and free themselves from the yoke of subjection which they had never felt before,

The Auracanos were unceasingly plotting how they might most securely compass their designs ; and, at length, after much debate among themselves, they resolved to rise unanimously against the Spaniards, and take their revenge ; but, before they put this grand design in practice, they began to talk haughtily, like masters of the land, (as they truly were,) and not like slaves : they quarrelled with one another, and, throwing off all respect, went so far as to kill some Spaniards in one of their contests, which was not, by the governor, resented as it ought, but rather winked at ; thus they quickly saw that they might proceed to greater lengths with impunity. They, accordingly, every day became more insolent, and shortly determined to put in practice what they had long meditated. For which purpose, the Auracanos were every where engaged in calling together their assemblies, to arrange the plans necessary to be adopted effectually to throw off the yoke of slavery in which they were held, and to recover for their children, the country of which they had been dispossessed. The grand assembly of the Indians was summoned in a very private and dexterous manner to meet, in a plain, in the district of the Auracanos, who, at that time, were at peace with the Spaniards. This nation is always regarded as

the most penetrating and sagacious of all the Indians, and are accordingly distinguished by the name of eagles.

They met, according to their custom, to eat and drink, at the appointed rendezvous, where, after long debates, it was finally decided to rise unanimously against the Spaniards. This point being settled, the next was to fix on a general-in-chief; in the choice of which they were long divided; at length, Caupolican, the bravest soldier and the ablest chief, was unanimously elected; this settled, they all swore obedience to his orders. They then examined each chief in turn, to see what force he could bring into the field, when the following caciques presented their report.

The first in age and experience, and a most violent enemy of the Spaniards, could bring three thousand soldiers, nearly all veterans; his name Tucapel. The next chief, his name Angot, a brave man, could bring four thousand. Cayocupil three thousand, whom he led from the Cordillera; as hardy as the rocks they came from, and capable of enduring any fatigue, Millatapue, an old man of great wisdom, brought five thousand. Parcara three thousand. Lemolino with six thousand. Maraguauno, Guelemo, and Leucossie, each, with three thousand. The robust Eduaira, considered as one of the strong,

est men, brought six thousand. Ongolmo four thousand. Pueren six thousand. Lincoyee, who was of the stature of a giant, seven thousand. Beteguelen, lord of the valley Auroco, from whence the whole took their name, six thousand ; and the ancient and chief of all, with as many more. The troops of Caupolitan, Thome, and Andalican, were to remain in reserve, to aid as occasion might require. This important business being over, they found, by their general muster, that their force was more than sufficient, in their opinion, to effect all which they desired, and therefore they determined to commence hostilities without delay.

The Spaniards had, as we have already mentioned, three castles for their security, between the city of the Conception and Valdivia, and one of them was near the post where the Indian assembly was held. This castle the Indians proposed to attack immediately, but their general forbade it, in order to do it with more dexterity and safety. He commanded Palsa, who performed the place of adjutant-general, to pick him out fourscore soldiers, of the most reputed bravery, and such as were least known to the Spaniards and the Indians their friends. These he put under the conduct of two very brave men, Cayaguano and Alcatipay. The Auracanos, though in peace with the Spaniards, were not

permitted to enter the castle, except such as served the Spaniards; these daily entered with loads of grass, wood, and other necessities for the garrison. Caupolicon ordered the fourscore men to feign themselves to be servants in the garrison, and to take with them the usual loads to the castle, and to conceal their arms in the grass or other burdens. On their entrance, they were not to answer if spoke to by the guard; each was to counterfeit lameness, weariness, and over-fatigue. These men performed their parts to admiration, and were all let in without the smallest suspicion, which was no sooner accomplished, when, agreeable to the instructions they had received, they threw down their loads, took each their arms, and fell upon the Spaniards with all the fury of enraged tigers; and, before the garrison could recover their surprise at such a daring assault, several of the Spaniards were killed or wounded. But the moment the Spaniards recovered themselves, a smart conflict ensued; in return, some of the Indian party were killed; the others, as was concerted, instantly retreated, in order to draw out the garrison in pursuit, that Caupolicon, with his army, might cut them off. The Spaniards, as expected, followed, and were met, at no great distance, by the advance of the Indian army. When the Spaniards saw them, they precipitately retreated to their

fort, to which Caupolicon immediately laid siege ; and, during two days' close investment, he killed the greater part of the garrison, the few that remained alive on the third night effected their escape, and fled to the castle of Puren. The news of this invasion soon reached the Conception, where the governor then was, and was instantly informed of the revolt ; but, instead of immediately sending troops to the assistance of those at Puren, he staid to erect a fort at the mines, in which, Herrera says, he had not less than fifty thousand men digging for gold for him.

As soon as the fort was finished, he set out for Puren, without waiting to collect a sufficient force to oppose Caupolicon, in which he greatly erred. Elevated by his former success, and trusting to his fortune, which he thought could never forsake him, he marched blindly on to that fate, which many concurring circumstances had given him cause to fear awaited him. His heart misgave him, for the first time, at his setting out from Tucapel : he had sent out several parties to reconnoitre, none of which had returned. This gave him most serious apprehensions ; but, being engaged, it was necessary to go on. He had scarcely marched two leagues from Tucapel, before he saw two heads hung by the hair to a tree, which he instantly knew to

be the heads of two of the last scouts he had sent. This sight increased his irresolution; and he consulted with the officers about him whether it would not be rash to proceed. The young men, whom experience had not made wise, were of opinion, it would be lessening their reputation, to turn their backs to danger, although, at the same time, there came to them an Indian friend of theirs, who earnestly desired them not to proceed, because Caupolicon, with twenty thousand men, was then near Tucapel; by which the hazard they ran was manifest. But this good advice was set at naught. The young men would listen to nothing but advancing to engage the enemy. The governor, therefore, contrary to his better judgment, continued his route, and soon came within sight of the enemy. To see and to attack, is always with the Indians one and the same thing; and, before the Spaniards could form into any order of battle, the enemy bore down tumultuously upon them. The battle was cruel on both sides, and fought with such dreadful animosity, that victory for a long time remained suspended. At length, the Spanish arms began to prevail, and, seeing it, they cried, *Viva España*, when, at that moment, the afterwards famous Lautaro, an Indian, who had been bred page to the governor Valdivia, having more regard to the love of his country and his liberty,

than for the education he had received, or the fidelity he owed his master, went over to the Indians, and prevailed on them to rally and return to the charge, concluding his speech with saying, " Drive away all fear, generous soldiers, and either live free or die." His speech had the desired effect; it inflamed their minds to fury, and, despising death, they rushed onward again to the charge, headed by Lautaro: who, to encourage them the more, advanced towards the governor, his master, shaking his lance, who, surprised at the action, cried, " Traitor, what dost thou do?" To which he answered only by a thrust, to animate his people; the fight was instantly renewed with much greater fury than ever. Lautaro encouraged his countrymen to perform the most desperate deeds: Valdivia did the same by the Spaniards, rushing into the greatest dangers; the conflict was too desperate to continue long. Valdivia saw every moment the bravest of his men fall around him, so that in less than an hour, he found himself nearly alone; and, seeing the battle lost, his chaplain, who had not been hurt, though he fought by his side during the whole of the battle, drew the governor aside from the midst of the dead, and, going to confess him, Valdivia had but a short time given him to make his peace with God, for a troop of Indians pouring down upon them,

instantly killed the chaplain, and took Valdivia prisoner, and brought him alive to their general, as the grandest triumph of their victory. When this great man was brought into the presence of Caupolicon, who was no less humane than brave, he was struck with pity to see so great a man humbled to a captive, his hands tied behind him, and his venerable face covered with blood. The chiefs immediately crowded round him to see him, and to decide his fate. The governor asked Caupolicon to spare his life, and he would immediately withdraw all the Spaniards from the country, and leave it free as he found it, and swear to the faithful performance of it. Caupolicon was inclined to accede to all the proposals, but the other caciques would not; and a violent debate took place, in the midst of which, one cacique could not listen with patience to what they said, vexed to find it made a question of, whether the governor should live or die, suddenly rose up, and struck him on the head with his war-club. Thus fell the great and brave Valdivia. Many authors assert that the Indians poured melted gold down his throat, and bid him take his fill of that which he had so insatiably coveted: be that as it may, it is certain they made flutes and trumpets of his thigh-bones and legs. His head was kept as a memorial of so great a victory, and to shew to their children, that they

might, when they looked upon it, be stimulated to imitate such heroic deeds.

Of all the Spanish army, it is said, there was but two Indian friends that escaped the general slaughter; these two, under cover of the night, were fortunate enough to make their escape, and reach the Concepcion, and brought the news of this fatal event; which, as soon as made known, filled the city with tears and lamentations, confusion and bitter complaints, since there was not one person in it left that had not some near relations to grieve for, and whose loss could never be repaired.

Caupolicon, immediately after this victory, called a council, to consider whether it would be most proper to follow up the success. The greater part of the council were of opinion, that no time should be lost, in marching against the different cities, that they might surprise them, before the Spaniards had time to recover the shame of their late defeat, or be prepared to defend them. Yet Caupolicon, after having heard them all, resolved to do otherwise. "It is better," said he, "to expect our enemies at our own homes than to go and seek them at theirs: at home, men fight with more valour, for they take arms to defend and protect all that is dear to them, their parents, their wives, and children. Let them, therefore, come to seek us in our bogs

and mountains, where we are sure of a safe retreat. Let us give our enemies free access to us, which will shew that we fear them not. In the mean time, let our soldiers and our horses refresh themselves. And if our enemies, out of fear, forbear to seek us, we can command our own time to seek them." Having spoken thus, he took Lautaro by the hand, commended him in the highest terms, attributing the victory and the liberty of his country solely to him, and, as a reward, by consent of all the council, constituted him his lieutenant-general, and gave him leave to choose out the men he would have to serve under him, and with them to march and fix upon a post to expect the Spaniards, not doubting, but they would arm, and endeavour to wipe off the stain of their disastrous defeat. Lautaro received the commendations and his commission with humility and gratitude. He was not a tall man, but well set, and strong, industrious, courteous, of good counsel, gentle, yet very brave, as we shall see hereafter. Whilst the Indians were amusing themselves by public feasts and dances in honour of their victory, the news reached Francisco de Villegran, lieutenant to Valdivia, that he was killed. The command in chief devolving upon him, he immediately assembled all the troops he possibly could, to go and take vengeance of the enemy

for this defeat ; and, setting off, directed his route to Arauco, where, when he arrived, he found Lautaro, with ten thousand men, posted on the top of a high mountain, one side of which was washed by the sea ; on the opposite side the ascent was tolerably easy, all the rest was broken precipice. The top afforded a good level plain of considerable extent, well calculated to draw up in, and very proper for his design. He had purposely withdrawn all the guards at the passes, not choosing to oppose the march of the Spaniards, or to attempt any thing against them, till they should attack him in his present position, which was most judiciously and wisely chosen.

The Spanish general, finding the enemy in such an advantageous position, was at first irresolute how to act ; he could not attack him in flank or rear ; there was but one way to ascend, and that presented inevitable death to those who should attempt it, by means of the arrows and darts, the enemy could pour down upon them from his commanding situation. The governor, unwilling to expose his men to such imminent danger, had thoughts of drawing off his troops, and marching onward in order to invite the Indians into the pursuit of him. He therefore made a feint, as though he designed not to engage ; but this had not the desired effect. Lautaro still kept his position. The governor, finding

there was not any thing left for him to do, but to attempt to gain the top of the mountain, he determined on it; but, not to risque the lives of too many, he ordered only three troops of horse to attempt the ascent. But they were presently driven back by the accumulated showers of stones, darts, and arrows, that were opposed to them every step they took in advance; they were, therefore, after three repeated attempts, obliged to relinquish it altogether. The Spaniards, seeing themselves exposed to useless attacks, where nothing could be gained but tiring their horses and men to no purpose, the general ordered them not again to attempt it, but to attack them with fire-arms, which was immediately done, and made great slaughter among the Indians. Lautaro, to remedy this, and to prevent its continuance, commanded Leucatau, one of his captains, to descend with a chosen body of men, and take the Spaniards in flank, and not to halt, till they came up close with the musqueteers, that, by this means, mingling with them, they might avoid the small shot; for the Spaniards could not, in that case, fire upon the Indians, without endangering their own men. These directions were punctually observed, and with the most gallant success; this manœuvre the Indians constantly practise to this day.

Leucatau observing his orders were executed

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with all the advantage he hoped, descended to the plain to succour the brave few that were so closely engaged ; so that the battle soon became general, each leader endeavouring to succour and encourage his men ; the fight was accordingly maintained with great obstinacy on both sides, each commander acting both as general and soldier and exposing himself to the greatest dangers. He that signalized his valour most on our side was captain Pedro Olmas de Aquilera, killing with his own hand four of the Indian chiefs ; he was seconded by the Bernales Pantoias Alverados, and many others who performed wonders in this battle, which was long contested, very bloody, and in suspense to the last. The enemy was much superior in strength to our forces, and not at all behind them in valour, and therefore the victory began to incline to their side, for though Velagran and others would rather have chosen to die there with honour, than turn their backs ; yet the greater part, judging that there could be no honour lost in a brave retreat, and that it would be rashness to persist in so desperate a case, they began to retire fighting and defending themselves with uncommon heroism. Thus they were harassed for six leagues without the smallest intermission ; at one time they got close to Velagran and knocked him off his horse, and would have instantly killed him, had not thirteen of his men advanced

at the moment and rescued him out of their hands. Thus a handful of brave men gained as much glory in this retreat, as if they had obtained a victory, the enemy being a hundred to one to them; add to which, they had seized on all the passes, so that the Spaniards were compelled at every pass, to cut their way through increasing numbers of Indians; and although they killed a great number of them, yet, like the hydra, they seemed to spring up anew, which caused each engagement to be more fatal to the Spaniards than the former; so that a very small number escaped to bring this second disastrous intelligence to the Conception. There were no inhabitants in that miserable city who had not lost the principal men of their families, there being none left but the aged and infirm. For, between Spaniards and friendly Indians, there was killed in the field and on the retreat two thousand five hundred men. To see the confusion and distress that was in the city, upon the arrival of the wounded fugitives, it might have been thought that the day of judgment was come. One in agony laments the loss of all his sons, another his father, others their brothers, women their husbands, who were wringing their hands, tearing their hair, and sending forth the most lamentable shrieks, which were heightened by the children clinging round their mothers, and crying for their fathers, who would never more

return ; which cruel sight was more grievous than all. In the midst of all these horrors night came on, in which no one could shut their eyes in consideration of their misfortunes.

Misfortunes seldom come alone, and so it happened to this afflicted city : which instead of receiving comfort from the approach of day, was only ushered in with greater and more afflicting horrors ; for scarcely did the dawn appear, when the dreadful sound of the enemy's drums and trumpets was heard advancing. Now then the confusion increased, for the concern was not now for the dead, but for every one's personal safety ; the danger threatening them so immediately, there was nothing but disorder, no counsel or resolution, being to be found in the wisest. They could not think of defending themselves, the enemy being too powerful, and their retreat was to be made through the most terrifying circumstances : in this hard and dreadful conflict, they at length resolved to abandon the city without pretending to save any thing but their lives. They accordingly leave the city, and all the gold that had been collected together in such large quantities ; they march out in long files, the mothers helping the little children and the aged along ; their steps were directed toward St. Jago, their only place of refuge. No pen is equal to relate the hardships of hunger and other sufferings they had to encounter, through so

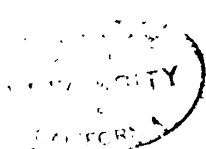
long a tract of mountains, deserts, and uninhabited countries. How the women, the children, and old men could bear such fatigue, we must leave to the imagination ; to form an adequate idea of their sufferings is impossible. Let us therefore return to the Indians. The Spaniards had scarcely made an end of abandoning the city, when the Indians entered it, and not being able to execute their rage upon the inhabitants, they did it upon the houses, to which they set fire, and consumed them to their foundations, killing even the very animals the Spaniards had left behind them. Thus was lost the city most abounding in gold, and situated in the most populous part of the Indian country ; for 'tis said by most authors, there were not less than a hundred thousand Indians and their families employed in gathering gold for the Spaniards.

The burning of the city being over, news was brought that Caupolicon had called a great assembly in Arauco which obliged Lautaro to return with his people to be present. When the two generals of the Auracaunos met, they complimented each other on the victories they had obtained over the Spaniards ; and in sign of triumph, one hundred and thirty caciques appeared in the assembly, all dressed in the clothes of the Spaniards killed in battle : the general Caupolicon, had on Valdivia's clothes, which were, as is reported, of green velvet trimmed with

gold; a back and breast-plate of well-tempered steel, and a helmet with a great emerald for a crest. Having seated themselves by the general's command, he proposed to them the design of conquering back all that had been taken from them by the Spaniards; when they all unanimously agreed to his proposal, giving their assent with great pride and arrogance, so much had their successes elevated them. It is said, that the old wise and prudent Colacolo, hearing them deliver their opinions with so much insolence and pride, presuming that all the world could not resist the valour of their arms; he thought it requisite to humble their pride, lest, by depending too much on their present good fortune, they should neglect the proper means to secure it. He therefore called to their remembrance, that, although they had gained two such glorious battles over the Spaniards, yet the Spaniards had gained many more victories over them, and had made them serve as slaves; he therefore advised them to behave with moderation and temper; for, although they might rationally expect further success from such happy beginnings, yet nothing was certain in war; and until the enemy was finally driven out of their country, nothing should be boasted of, and every one's opinion should be given with prudence, caution, and reserve: and added, as his own,

that, it was most advisable to divide their army into three divisions, and march to assault the city of the Imperial.

As soon as the wise Colacolo had done speaking, the celebrated Puchecaleo, a cacique prophet, following the same idea of humbling the intolerable haughtiness of the assembly, told them they might give over their presumption, for he was to acquaint them that, having consulted his oracles, they had answered him, that though at present they were so victorious over their enemies, yet it was decreed, they were at last to live under the Spanish yoke, in perpetual slavery. The Cacique Tucapal could not bear to hear this, and, rising in fury from his place, advanced toward the venerable prophet, and lifting his mace of arms, struck him with one blow dead at his feet. The whole assembly instantly arose in the greatest confusion; the general was more than all affected at the horrid act, and attempted with others to secure the murderer; but being a very strong and powerful man, he defended himself so well with his mace, they were obliged to let him escape, several of the assembly being wounded by him. Lautaro, who was present and had great influence over the general, prevailed on him not to pursue Tucapal, but at present to dissemble, and take a more fit opportunity to revenge the murder, which appeared to be the general opinion. They then without longer



deliberation unanimously agreed to adopt the opinion of the prudent and wise Colacolo, and march without delay to the attack of the Imperial. Agreeable to this decision, the Indian army divided into three brigades, and took their route toward that city. Being arrived within three leagues of it, they halted in a large plain to refresh the men and horses, and to arrange the necessary business for the assault. The city, though it had a good garrison of brave men, was nevertheless wholly unprepared for a siege, having neither ammunition or victuals, their supplies having been cut off for some time before by the enemy, who had constantly laid in wait and succeeded in intercepting all that had been sent to strengthen and supply the city, which had for thirteen days before been reduced to live on rats, mice, or any kind of roots or herbs they could procure within the protection of the forts. Their fate, then, on the approach of the enemy became deperate in the extreme, enfeebled as they already were from want of sustenance, and no other means left to defend their city, but by fighting hand to hand with the Indians, in which close engagements the Indians ever had the advantage. In addition, to aggravate their perils, all the avenues to a retreat was cut off, the enemy having taken possession of all the passes, and wholly surrounded the city with more men in the fourth part of one of their three

divisions, than the whole garrison contained. Thus situated they came to the desperate resolution of calling together every one within the city, men, women, and children, and, as soon as the enemy advanced to the assault, to fire the fort, and perish altogether in the flames. This dreadful alternative being determined on they instantly prepared every thing for the event ; while they were thus busied, the Indians continued their route, and the van of their army had already advanced near the city ; when in a moment there arose a most dreadful storm of hail and rain, with black clouds that descended so low as to envelope the whole of the Indian army, which immediately halted, not being able to see their way before them ; they were struck with consternation and dismay, when the clouds opening, their Epunamon, or god which they worshipped, appeared to their view in the form of a dragon, casting fire out of his mouth, and his tail curled up, and, with a loud and terrible voice, bid them make haste, for the city was theirs, that they should enter it and put to death all the Christians ! It then disappeared. Animated by this diabolical oracle, they again began to advance, notwithstanding the darkness, but in a few minutes the sky in an instant cleared up, and a very beautiful woman appeared upon a bright cloud, with a charming but majestic and severe countenance : this second vision struck them all with awe and

reverence, and took from them all the pride and haughtiness of assured success, inspired in them by their god. She commanded them to return to their own homes, for the God of the Christians would assuredly favour and protect them, from all the destruction intended for them by the Indians. Her voice seemed to strike a panic into their souls, their courage and vigour seemed in a moment to forsake them; and, as if driven by some invisible impulse, they instantly turned to obey her commands, each striving who should be the first to turn their backs upon the city.

All the authors who have treated of the Auracan war, are unanimous in the truth of this story: they assert that the two apparitions were not only distinctly seen by the whole of the Indian army, but by the Spanish garrison and are exact in every particular; and to this hour the Spaniards firmly believe that the beautiful vision was the Holy Virgin, who had seen and pitied their misery, and compassionately came to save them all from destruction. The garrison, being thus relieved from their fears by the decampment of their enemies, soon recovered their spirits and sent of an account of what had occurred to St. Jago. These messengers finding all the passes open and no enemy to be seen, soon returned with every necessary for the relief of the city; which being received, they made it their first business to put the

garrison in such a state of defence, as to be able to defend themselves for a long time, should the Indians return. After some time the governor of St. Jago finding the city not likely to be attempted by the enemy, and that the Imperial continued in safety, began to think of returning to the Concepcion and rebuilding it: to this end they raised all the men possible at St. Jago, and sent them thither; but being few, they with great difficulty compassed their design in making a good fortress within the city for its better security, which they had scarcely completed, before the Indians in the neighbourhood, although they pretended to be friends with the Spaniards, did not like to have them again as neighbours, or see them build places of such strength in which they might bid defiance to the lawful owners of the land. They dissembled, however, their dislike, but sent privately to Arauco, desiring help to drive away these invaders a second time, or extirpate them at once. Lautaro complied with their desires, and soon arrived with a well appointed army. As soon as this news reached the Spaniards, who were at work upon the fortifications, they formed themselves into companies, and marched to encounter the Indians, before they should reach the city; but their small number was by no means competent to resist such a numerous force as that Lautaro had brought against them, and all they could do was

to retreat, desperately fighting their way back to the fortress, whither the Indian army soon followed and instantly attacked it : the Spaniards defended themselves with the utmost bravery, but being at length overpowered by numbers, all that could compass their escape, fled a second time to the city of St. Jago : but a very few reached that city, for Lautaro, ordered a pursuit in which many fell. These dismal tidings once more threw that city into the utmost confusion, not doubting but that Lautaro would pursue his march and advance directly upon them. But Lautaro for the present was prevented by being obliged to return to Arauco, where great rejoicings were made at this second destruction of the Conception ; and an assembly being summoned, they debated whether they should renew the war which had been suspended by the visions they had seen at the Imperial : but the success which had attended this expedition of Lautaro, did away all their fears, and they came to a decided point, that the war should be renewed and that all their force should be directed against the capital ; concluding, when that was taken, all the minor cities would be theirs without much further trouble. This object being determined, Lautaro was fixed upon to command the expedition.

As soon as he had made a choice selection of his forces, from the bravest of them, he began his

march from Arauco with a powerful army, the greater part of whom were veterans. The news of his march, and his designs soon reached St. Jago; but many could not be induced to believe it: they thought it impossible for Lautaro to march such an immense distance, the more so as he did not attempt it when he succeeded at the Concepcion; but the governor Velagran, was of another opinion, and therefore commanded the city to be put in the best state of defence; and scouts to be sent out to scour the country, to give timely notice of the Indians' advance: the first that discovered them returned immediately, and gave notice of their approach. The governor, who was ill at the time, sent his cousin Pedro de Velagran with all the forces he could spare from the city to oppose Lautaro's further advance. The Spaniards came up with his van in about six hours, when a skirmish took place, and by those Indians Velagran learned that they were within half an hour's march of the main body, who were encamped, and had raised a fort for their defence on the banks of the Rio Clara. The Spaniards upon this intelligence halted for the night; but as soon as the dawn appeared they set forward to the attack. Lautaro, ever upon the watch, was soon advised of their approach; and, by the rapidity of their movements concluded they meant to surprise the fort: he, therefore, instantly withdrew his men from thence, and retired with

them to a wood, at a short distance in the rear, which served as an ambush, leaving only a small party who were ordered to fly as the Spaniards came up, in order to make it appear as though they were the straggling remains of the whole army who had fled upon their approach : the whole fell out as Lautaro designed it ; the Spaniards coming up and finding the fort abandoned, entered it, and took quiet possession ; concluding the Indian army was actually fled, they did not think it worth their while to pursue them. This was what Lautaro had foreseen ; he therefore remained concealed till he was certain the whole of the Spanish force was come up ; he then, with all his army burst from his concealment, and like lions fell upon the Spaniards in the fort, who were obliged to exert all the energy and valour they were masters of, to cut their way out of the fort and effect a retreat, the Indians pursuing them above a league. The Spaniards, not at all discouraged by the retreat, were soon reinforced and marched again to dislodge Lautaro ; our people halted in a valley, a short distance from the Indian camp ; here they formed and soon advanced to attack the fort ; but the showers of arrows, darts, and stones, that was poured upon them, obliged them to draw off ; three times they returned to the assault, and was each time compelled to retire to the main body with a design to renew the attempt as soon as

more troops had arrived, which was hourly expected. Lautaro, aware of their design, was determined to prevent their putting it in execution, by destroying the whole of the Spanish camp at once.

The Spaniards were encamped in a low valley, at a short distance from the Rio Clara, on the banks of which the Indians' fort was situated: as also in the same valley but upon higher ground, which gave them the full command of the river and the Spanish camp. Lautaro, ever fertile in expedients, directed a large trench to be dug in a line from the river, to the centre of the outer line of his own entrenchments, where the descent of the valley commenced and which bore immediately upon the Spanish camp. His design was, by cutting the trench deeper than the bed of the river, to compel it to take its course through the trench, and, by that means overflow the Spanish camp, from which none could escape, the river being in itself extremely rapid. This scheme was to have been put in practice the following night, but Velagran having noticed the business the Indians were employed on, presently suspected the design; he accordingly called an instant council, in which it was determined they should, as soon as possible, after evening, retire from their camp with the utmost silence, and march immediately for St. Jago. They were happy enough to accomplish their re-

treat, without any molestation, to the astonishment and disappointment of Lautaro. But, though thus circumvented, he did not give up his designs upon St. Jago; but, as he had lost a great number of men in the different skirmishes, he determined to remain in his position, till the reinforcements should arrive which he expected. Here then he remained encamped, having nothing, as he thought, to fear from the Spaniards. The inhabitants of St. Jago, were engaged night and day in strengthening their city both with forts and supplies; and they drew from all the garrisons, such as could in any way be spared.

When every arrangement was made that prudence could suggest, the governor Velagran, set off with a chosen number of men, as if he was going to Arauco; which route he pursued till he came within a certain distance of the Imperial; when he suddenly changed his route and arrived at that city, from which garrison he selected a good many men on whom he could rely; and, taking them with him and an Indian guide, came suddenly and silently upon Lautaro, whom he immediately attacked in his fort, and in the first assault, Lautaro was the first that fell, shot through the heart with an arrow. His soldiers, when they saw their gallant leader fall, instead of being in the least discouraged, became furious as tigers: they defended his dead body with the most consum-

mate bravery, and enraged to madness with such a loss, and, urged by a desire of revenge, they fell upon the Spaniards like lions ; nothing seemed to withstand their fury ; they scorned to beg their lives, but to a man rushed towards the enemy : though the Spaniards' lances kept them off, yet they threw themselves upon the points, and with their hands pulled them into their bodies that they might come near enough to their enemy to revenge their death with his, or at least die in the attempt. In this manner they fought to the last man, not one of the fort remained alive, they all fell around the body of their leader. This desperate victory was dearly purchased by our people, for, from Velagran to the common soldier, every officer was either killed or wounded, and but very few of the men escaped. But the victory was complete, and by it decided the fate of the city ; St. Jago's safety was secured, as they could have nothing further to fear from the Indians for a considerable time.

Velagran did not long survive the battle, he died with the reputation of a brave man, and a judicious and excellent commander. Immediately upon his death, application was made to the viceroy of Peru, to appoint a governor till the king's pleasure should be known respecting it. The viceroy at this time was Don Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza, marquis of Canete, who governed with great zeal and a prudent severity, making exem-

plary punishments where they were necessary, by which he secured the country. He had then with him his son Don Garcia Hurtado de Mendoza, who afterwards succeeded him in his viceroyship, and was equally worthy of public applause and esteem. The ambassadors from Chili, desired him of his Excellency the father for their governor, which he granted. King Philip the Second had appointed the Adelantado Hyeronimo de Aldente to succeed the governor Valdivia, whose death was known at the court of Spain ; but the news came likewise that Aldente was dead in the island of Tobago near Panama. The viceroy's son having raised a considerable body of horsemen, sent part of them with the horses by land to St. Jago, and himself and the rest of the troops went by sea. In the voyage they were overtaken by a most violent storm, in which they had nearly perished. He, however, arrived safe in the bay of the Conception, and landed upon the island of Quiriquena, to inform himself of the state of the country. The people of the island, who were fierce and warlike, when they saw the ships draw near the harbour, took up arms and attempted to hinder the Spaniards from landing ; but, having no fire-arms, nor ever having seen any, they gave way as soon as the cannon of the ships began to fire. When the governor landed, he published the design of his coming, which was principally to make known to them the christian faith by

the means of baptism ; and if they would submit to that, he would treat with them in the name of his master the emperor Charles the Vth. To this declaration the islanders paid but little attention. However, the Araucanos soon heard of it, and directly called an assembly of the people to treat about what was best for them to do in the present case ; the young caciques made many bold and arrogant speeches according to their usual custom ; and, their habitual haughtiness caused them to despise all good counsel ; but the old and prudent Colocolo restrained their pride with prudent reasons, and persuaded them to treat with the Spaniards, since they were invited by them to do it. It cannot hurt us, said he to them ; we shall have our forces as heretofore, still to maintain our rights, if they demand unjust things. This opinion was followed by the most discreet among them ; and they sent as their ambassador, to the Spaniards, Milalo, a man famed for his eloquence. They gave him orders to treat with the Spaniards, and at the same time to observe well their strength ; and that he should manifest inclinations for peace, in order to draw the Spaniards to land on the continent, hoping the desire of gold would soon tempt them to advance further into the country. Milalo came to the governor's tent, and, after a proper and becoming salutation, he,

with a cheerful countenance, respectfully delivered his message.

He said that his countrymen admitted the terms of peace that were proposed, and should observe those of friendship, not out of any terror or apprehension caused in them by the arrival of these new forces; for no power was great enough to terrify them, having sufficiently experienced their strength in the success they had hitherto obtained; but that which moved them was the compassion they had for so many innocent people; so many women and children whom the war had made widows and orphans. On which account, on fair terms, they would own the king of Spain: but, upon condition that he left them in full and continued possession of their rights and liberties, which they valued above all other considerations. That if they had any thought of acting by violence and making them slaves, they would sooner eat their children and kill themselves, than suffer so great a degradation. The governor answered him with a firm assurance of all the good treatment they could desire or demand; and having made him some presents, he returned to give an account of his embassy. But this was not sufficient security for either side, and therefore both remained upon their guard. At length the Indians observing the cautious conduct of the Spaniards, feigned to dismiss

their forces; but secretly gave them order to be upon their guard, and not lay down their arms, but be ready upon any occasion that might happen. The Spaniards nevertheless did not think proper to land upon the continent; but stayed two months upon the island where they first landed, till the winter was entirely over; and when the spring commenced, they set on shore one hundred and thirty of their bravest men, to raise a fort on the top of a hill which overlooks the city of the Conception: under the protection of this fortress, the rest of the Spaniards quitted the island, hoping in a little time their horses which were coming by land, would arrive. In the meantime they cut and made fascines to fortify their camp; the governor and his officers setting the example by working in the trenches, felling wood and throwing up the intrenchments as the meanest labourer, and with the same facility as if they had never done any thing else all their lives: by this means they soon brought it to perfection, and planted upon it eight field-pieces with all other necessary provisions for their defence. The Araucanos, who were sedulously watching all their movements, no sooner saw the fort completed, but, without staying for any further proof of their intentions, which they concluded to be for war, immediately called an assembly, the result of which was not to delay a moment to take up arms, and march to demolish

the fort, which was the first object of their thoughts. They marched next day and took up their post at Talcaquana, two miles from the Spanish fort; and at break of day sounded their trumpets, giving the alarm, challenged out as many Spaniards to single combat, as would chose to accept it, and waited there three hours for an answer; but at the expiration of that time finding that none came forward, they gave the signal for a general assault. This they immediately commenced by advancing in close columns, with their accustomed impetuosity, not in the least heeding the cannon, which they knew could only endanger them whilst advancing; for, when the battalions came to close engagement, neither large or small shot would advantage the Spaniards any thing: they therefore came on with the most undaunted resolution. Many of them got over the fortifications, amongst whom was Tucapal, whose wonderful actions astonished and confounded all the Spaniards: and though they exerted all the courage and resolution it was possible for brave men to do, yet they would have been completely destroyed, had not a timely force from the ships, come to their assistance, and enabled them to drive the Indians out of the fort: the fight, as soon as they came up, was in a moment more furious than ever. The Indians fell on all sides; and, as soon as the Araucanos noticed the advantage the Spaniards

gained, they sounded a retreat, which all effected but Tucapal, who refused to go out of the fort till all his men were secure. Then, though wounded in the most desperate manner, and surrounded by enemies, he refused to yield himself a prisoner, actually cutting his way through the Spaniards and escaping, without any one being rash enough to follow him. His actions appeared to the Spaniards, to be something more than human; and, as he quitted them, they gazed after him with astonishment at his courage, valour, and resolution.

The Spanish force was reduced by this desperate affair, to less than one half, and nearly the whole of them badly wounded; and, for want of men to dig the graves, the dead were thrown into the sea. The greater part of the fortifications had been demolished, which, they were obliged immediately to repair; the governor, and all, whatever their rank, was compelled to work on the fortifications, the same as the meanest slave: none but the priests were absent from it; who were fully employed in administering aid to the sick and wounded, many of whom died, notwithstanding the utmost care was taken of them. The Spaniards, however, did not despair, hoping, when the horses arrived, which they might daily expect, they should then be in no danger from the further operations of the Indians. It was not long before the wished-for succours arrived, and with them, a troop of horsemen from the Imperial.

This most seasonable supply soon raised the drooping spirits of the Spaniards, and every thing by their assistance, and the excellent example of the governor, was soon placed in a perfect state of defence ; so that they were enabled as soon as the wounded men recovered to advance into the country. The governor directed his march to the valley of Arauco, where they found their enemies assembled in great force, and ready to receive them. To meet and to engage, when these two desperate enemies came in sight of each other, was but the work of a moment ; here then another very bloody engagement took place, when the Araucanos, who had suffered severely from the Spanish fire, were compelled to retreat in their desperate manner, one man only remained a prisoner to the Spaniards, his name Gaulbarino. This being the first prisoner they had taken, they, in order to terrify the Indians, cut off both his hands, and thus mutilated, sent him back to his friends. As soon as he was able, he went to the grand assembly of the people, and shewing his wounds, begged them to revenge him, since he could not, thus deprived of his hands, be his own avenger. This they all swore to do, looking upon his cause as their own, and to shew the Spaniards that, instead of having frightened them by their cruelty to a single prisoner, it would only serve to augment and aggravate their general revenge, which they were without delay determined to effect : for

which purpose Caupolicon, their general in chief, sent a challenge to Don Garcia, the governor, to meet him with all his strength ; telling him that he would wait for him in his camp, which he should immediately move to a short distance from the Spaniards, who were then encamped near Milharipue. It was night when the Indian army arrived, but they immediately formed in front of the Spaniards in battle array, but the governor forbid any movements till day-break. As soon therefore as morning came, the Spaniards advanced to the attack, and the fight shortly became general. The Indians, with their accustomed bravery, closed with their enemies, and thus, hand to hand, they engaged for above three hours ; so that nothing was to be seen on both sides, but acts of the most desperate valour. The Indians urged on by revenge pressed the Spaniards so closely, that victory had certainly declared for them, had not a Spanish battalion, on whom rested all their hopes, returned to the charge so desperately among the Indians, that they were at length compelled to give way, and, as usual retired fighting, leaving the field to the Spaniards. Their retreat was conducted in such a masterly style, they gained more honour by it, than their enemies did by being masters of the field. In this engagement some Indians, not attached to the army, were made prisoners ; these the Spaniards, to their eternal dis-

grace, put to the most cruel tortures, to compel them to discover where the gold that was in the Conception at the time of Valdivia's death had been lodged; but all these poor men suffered could not in any shape make them betray their trust, and they died under the hands of their tormentors, with the same heroic fortitude as the Christian martyrs. From this place the governor directed his march to the valley where Valdivia was lost. Here they quickly erected a fort and entrenched themselves, meaning to make this a sort of head-quarters, from whence they could make excursions upon the enemy, whenever an opportunity presented itself to seize the treasure, and advance their conquest; but the Indians daily sent out strong detachments, to be constantly hovering near them; so that they could not without manifest danger, advance a single league into the country. The governor was greatly irritated to find his intention daily baffled by the Indians; he therefore ordered a strong party out to take possession of a pass, that led over the mountains on the way to Puren; at this pass a most sanguinary conflict took place, in which the Spaniards lost a great many men, and would most certainly have been obliged to relinquish the object of their march, had not the Indians who were not engaged, fell to plundering the Spanish baggage. A company of Spaniards that was engaged at a little distance from

the main party noticing this error of the Indians, and seizing on a small point of the hill that projected over the lower ground, where the baggage lay, instantly poured down a volley of shot upon the Indians, which dispersed them in a moment; for they instantly fled in all directions, not rightly knowing from whence the firing came: this gave the Spaniards an opportunity to recover their baggage, and hold possession of the pass for a short time, when they returned to the camp. The governor, shortly after, having provided the garrison with every requisite for a long siege, quitted the fort to visit the cities, to strengthen and provide them with all necessaries against attacks which they soon had reason to fear.

Caupolicon, angered and vexed at having lost in three months, as many victories, and so many brave men, had summoned in haste another general assembly of the people, to be more numerously attended than any that had as yet been. The caciques being summoned from the most remote districts, came at the time appointed; and the whole world could not produce a greater number of determined heroes, or finer men, than were met together in this assembly: they were so very numerous that the debates lasted a week, when an unanimous assent was announced never to give over the war, till they had restored their country's liberty and independence, and to secure which

every one was determined either to conquer or to die. As soon as this result was known, every chief hastened to his home to prepare his men and horses, and to be in readiness to march as soon as the general should apprize them of the time fixed for the general rendezvous. Caupolicon, with all the wisdom of an old and experienced general, was deliberately arranging the plan of the future campaign; whilst he was thus employed the——

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM obliged to suspend my further progress in the translation of the history, having been requested this morning, by the bishop's private secretary, to attend Father Pablo, on a visit to his lordship, at an episcopal palace about five leagues from St. Jago. Thither then I go, but, at my return, I trust I shall pursue the history, which I feel a great interest in, the more as I advance, and I think that you will also, should it please God my letters reach you; and I hope they will, that you may be at peace on my account, for you will see that I am well, and tolerably content. I do as I please, and go out and come in at my pleasure, stay in my room as much as I think proper; sometimes spend an hour or two with the Fathers, eat little and drink less, never more than one goblet of wine at my dinner; never converse unless absolutely compelled, or at least to avoid being regarded as unsocial. There are but very few of the Fathers, who are not very loquacious in their cups; when they will sometimes take a fancy

to converse with me, not upon the merits of a Locke or a Newton, but upon the comforts and blessings of a monastic life; which they, most dogmatically, affirm to be the only happy state for mortals in this sublunary world. It, however, not unfrequently happens that, in the midst of an elaborate oration upon the subject, the good Father forgets himself and falls sound asleep, when all the rest following his example, take their siesta also, and I retire to my room, there to think on those that are still as ever present to my mind: when thought becomes painful, I start up and away to some one or other of the gardens, where I find plenty to engage my attention, and soon recover serenity, hum "Viva la Bagatella," and think no more; till another fit takes me, and then, oh! oh! but it must not be. I have delivered Father Savedro's letter, and when I return I shall give you some little account of the person to whom I gave it: but I shall not be so particular as I intended, for a reason I am not at liberty to assign, unless I was in England. I have not been fortunate enough to fall in with any French, although I know there are several here and at Valparaiso. I am well persuaded that all is not right at Lima, or its vicinity, or they have heard some unpleasant news from Europe respecting their affairs at Rome.

Our good Superior does not seem to be in spirits, for these four or five days. I generally wait upon

him every morning to inquire after his health, and to have a little chat. He seems very anxious to learn some news respecting a presidency about twenty leagues south-east from hence ; in which a half brother of Father Pablo's, a man of great consequence, takes a more than common interest; it having been founded by an uncle of theirs, who, for his piety and the great fortune he left at his death to the society, has procured for him a canonization, and his name to be emblazoned in gold letters, in what I have named the red-book of the saints. My friend, if all those that have been canonized by the see of Rome are actually gone to heaven, I fear there will be little room for you or me, when we have finished our journey here, and come to present our *passa a porta* to St. Peter. If any one in this hemisphere ever did or ever will deserve such a distinction, none was ever more deserving it than those excellent and good men that first made known the ways of God to the poor Indians, and framed such just and equitable laws. Would his Holiness confer that honour on my late valued and ever-lamented Father Hernandez, I should then think there was some degree of merit attached to it ; but I hear not from Father Pablo that any thing of that sort is thought of. During our discourse yesterday morning, the Superior asked me rather hastily, as if it had been the impulse of the moment, what my real senti-

ments were of a monastic life? did I consider it as the immediate command of God, or merely as an institute ordained by man? The question, and the hasty manner in which the good Father spoke, at the moment surprised me, so much, that I could not on the instant recollect myself so far as to be able to answer him with any degree of propriety: my hesitation seemed to give the Father time to recollect himself as well as me, and looking earnestly in my face, with a smile of benignant kindness peculiar to himself, said, I fear, Brother, my question has rather perplexed you; I own it was wrong, therefore we will wave the subject and talk of something else. But I have imperceptibly got into a mode of reasoning, since I have been at St. Jago this time, and daily conversing with you that has given my ideas a strange turn, or else it is thinking much on the loss of our brother Hernandez: I cannot help considering him as an absolute sacrifice to court policy, which, if persisted in will most assuredly destroy itself; the same scene will, I fear, be acted here shortly if such destructive plans are put in execution on this side the Andes, as have been on the other. Religion now appears to have fled to her parent skies, as well as justice; 'tis become now a mockery, and the pastors of our holy church are as little regarded as the most ignorant Indian, by all the Spanish laity: they meet with no respect but from the Indians,

unless for reasons of state, where the church and the state is so connected that one cannot be depreciated without sinking the other.

It grieves me to think that his Majesty is kept in such a state of ignorance respecting the real state of all the religious communities in this hemisphere: he is a good and beneficent king, and, were he but well informed, I am most certain, his respect and love for our church would cause other measures to be adopted. If not, the end of it will be, that both church and state will fall into confusion together; like the distracted French nation, who has thrown off, I am told, all respect for God or his ministers, and set up a god of their own making. This is too shocking; and I firmly hope the holy Mother of God will take the Spanish nation under her protection, and save it from the same miserable fate. It is too horrid even to think on! more especially to have such diabolical tenets spread their baneful influence over the poor Indians, than whom none are more devout or more sincere Christians than those converted among us. Believe me, brother, I should feel more for those harmless people than for all the enlightened of Europe. Their principles, at this moment, are uncontaminated; but they would not long remain so were Frenchmen to come among them; for then, farewell to all order and subordination; anarchy and confusion

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will soon follow, and every evil be aggravated in a ten-fold degree. Your nation is a truly happy one, although she is not precisely within the pale of our holy mother church ; yet I cannot help regarding her as the particular favourite of Heaven, since she has not, like her neighbours, destroyed the religion she professed. The court here already begin to shew symptoms of a wish to adopt the principles of France : our great men frequently throw out hints that the ecclesiastics are too numerous, and too rich ; and that a much less number would serve the purpose of saving souls. These sentiments are spoken freely, and even in the presence of our Lord Bishop, who is, by no means, a rigid or severe pastor. All this makes me uneasy. I cannot be at peace, whilst I consider any of those committed to my care to be any ways in danger. I am anxious to prove myself a good shepherd ; to be watchful that none go astray, or that any should be destroyed by the enemies of mankind. But what will all the care and attention avail, if those who are at the head of the state are careless in the matter, or are wanting in that respect towards us that our habit demands as servants of the Most High. The young men who are now called to the holy office are not such as they were when I took the habit : their manners are corrupted, and the little respect they see paid by the grandees to the

different orders, causes them to be remiss in their duties, and not to fear the censures of their Superiors. I noticed yesterday at dinner the surprise you evinced at the sallies of those young men lately arrived. Such behaviour is now become frequent, and is not at all reprehended by the Fathers. From whence this inattention or apathy proceeds I am at a loss to account. Had they belonged to my order, I should certainly have imposed on each a long and severe silence; but as I was not, silence best became myself: I could only see, hear, and wonder.

We shall shortly go to the Conception, it being his lordship's intention, as metropolitan, to visit all the churches, and cause some alterations to be made, and some new forms adopted, which it is the will of his Majesty, or rather, I should suppose, of the governors, to be settled. How far these changes may be requisite or beneficial, I cannot pretend to say; time must be the only decider of that question. However, I must bear my part in the regulations, be they what they may. Should it be in any manner calculated to better the cause of the Indians at the presidencies, I shall most assuredly rejoice; but, should it in any shape be designed to subvert the system established by the fathers, it will go far to help me more rapidly on my journey to that world of peace where no earthly interests will clash, or

court policy prevail. I have detained you, brother, a long while this morning, as I may not have an opportunity of communicating my thoughts to you again before we leave St. Jago : after which, the state we shall move in with his lordship, will prevent any familiar converse ; and, as my good brother Hernandez reposed a firm confidence on your honour, you see I have now done the same, that you might know what my real sentiments are, and I think you will respect them. Peace and comfort to the presidencies is all I have to wish for, and could I be happy enough to see that, I shall then return in peace to my brethren : we shall know in the course of a few days when our progress will commence. But I think it will not be, till after the marriage of his lordship's niece, which would have taken place some time since, had the dispensation arrived from Rome as expected ; the ties of consanguinity being such as to demand the assent of his Holiness, before it could be solemnized. She has, indeed, been already married to the brother of the intended bridegroom, who died, leaving three children. There is also some other obstacle, but of what nature I do not rightly understand : I have indeed heard that the gentleman was married at the time of his brother's death, and that this lady he repudiated for some alleged cause, in order to give his hand to his brother's widow : he

has also children by his wife, but they are not here; they are two boys, and at the college of Salamanca. The superior of this convent, who is uncle to the repudiated lady, takes, I believe, an active part in opposing the intended marriage. I would not have you, brother Mathias, shew, by your manner, that you are acquainted with any thing relative to either party; but I think I need not make my request to you on this matter, or any thing else I have mentioned.—At saying this, without staying for my acknowledgment for the honour he had done me in this confidential converse, he left me. This excellent man would go far to redeem the credit of many societies; he is, in word and in deed, the counterpart of Father Hernandez. From this morning's conversation, I am confirmed in my opinion, that great and eventful changes are about to take place in this new world; and as I hinted in some of my former letters, that, before twenty years are elapsed, the liberty of this country will be secured, provided it can receive aid from England. Thereon depends the whole. England, great and glorious England, is the only country that never stained their hands with the blood of the innocent; nor has a single conquest of theirs, in all their discoveries, been maintained by the point of the sword. These, and these only, are the people whom the Indians

must look up to, and by them, and them alone, will it be atchieved.

You cannot conceive with what pleasure I anticipate my arrival at the Conception. I long to be among the Auracannos, to see and contemplate at pleasure those descendants of heroes ; with whom I hope and trust our nation will be incorporated ; for, in Chili, I am well persuaded the liberation of South America must be accomplished, and, by those nations, aided by Britain, will their permanent happiness be alone secured. For the gratitude of those people is proverbial here, and where gratitude takes up her abode, there is, assuredly, the seat of every other virtue. Then think what a wide field there is for expectation. We will suppose that some of our brave men had effected their junction with the natives, and had made known to them their views and their intentions, to aid and assist them, by every means in their power, to throw off the yoke of their slavery, and to renovate them as an enfranchised people. We will suppose their offers are accepted, and the Indians, without one dissenting voice, proclaim those noble Britons their sole hope and universal friends, and hear them, in the face of the sun, swear by that great and beneficent and glorious luminary, (whom they all adore,) never but in death, to forsake their leaders, never to do any thing contrary to their or-

ders, or to dispute for a moment, their commands. This compact being made, let the British banners be unfurled, as a rallying point for all, and, under these banners, and to the tune of Rule Britannia, let the march commence; and had I a thousand lives to stake, I would risk them all, that victory, unqualified victory, would be in their favour: that is to say, as long as the British character and name remained uncontaminated, nothing would be able to resist them, for the God of armies would go before them in the day of battle, and lead them on securely as he did the Israelites towards the land of promise. Adieu.

LETTER XII.

Convent of St. Francis, St. Jago.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE president of the Audiencia having been taken suddenly ill about an hour before we were to have left St. Jago, for the bishop's palace in the valley of Mapocho, our journey was suspended, his lordship having been sent for immediately on the president's being first seized. It is not ascertained what is the malady, unless it be an epidemic fever, which has prevailed in this city for the last three weeks, and has proved fatal to many. We have had almost ever since I have been here very unsettled weather, which is very unusual on the western side of the Cordillera, as being without the tropics, the seasons are in general steady and certain. The small-pox too has begun to shew itself among the Indians, a disease that is here named the plague, and is as much dreaded as what we term the plague is with us. Its ravages, I am told, are sometimes so dreadful, as to sweep off in the course of a fortnight or three weeks, from thirty to fifty thousand Indians in the more populous

districts. The officers of the public works have this morning given notice that all the crown works are suspended, and all intercourse is stopped between the Indians of the city, and those in the neighbouring farms. The public processions that were to have taken place this week have likewise received orders not to appear, but to confine the procession to the church and cloisters. Father Pablo, with all the humanity of a true Christian, would go this morning with two brothers of this order to administer the sacraments to some of the Indians that are attached to the farms belonging to the convent; he had hoped to have prescribed something that might mitigate the severity of the disease, and possibly save some lives: I accompanied them thither; but such a scene as I witnessed, I earnestly hope I never more shall see again. There were thirty-seven in all at the first farm, twenty-three of whom were in a state that baffles all description: it was scarcely possible to distinguish a single feature: the head, and indeed the whole of their bodies being swelled to such a violent degree. No distinct pustules appeared; it was all in one entire mass of eruption. They were all laid in a kind of long hovel, such as our farmers have for their cattle; it was entirely open on one side, and slightly roofed with a kind of reed, or leaves of

trees. Their beds were nothing more than grass cut recently down, not at all dry; their pillows a piece of wood with some of the grass laid on it, and some very coarse hard cloth for covering. O God! how my heart revolted at the sight. My good Superior appeared to be no less affected, but he said nothing, sighed very deeply, and, I am certain, shed tears as he leaned over them, to speak comfort to their departing souls. He hastened to execute this Samaritan office in which I assisted him to raise the poor sufferers, whilst he administered the holy oils. There was not a moment to lose; as one of them died in a few minutes after he had received the extreme unction, with the cross pressed to his lips, as his last breath left the miserable body. O! my friend, it was a most piteous sight: and this poor Indian deserved canonization better than nine-tenths of those in the Roman calendar. I shall, I trust, meet and know him in that world where all are equal, where all sufferings cease, and tyranny is no more. The excellent Father Pablo remained with these heavily-afflicted beings above two hours: during that time three were released by the hand of death from all their misery; two with the other Fathers, and one with us. As soon as all had received the sacrament, the Fathers of St. Francis were for returning immediately; but my Superior

thought proper to show them, that it was their duty, and the duty of every one that called themselves Christians, to endeavour, if possible, to get some medicine taken by them all, which might allay, in some measure, the virulency of the disease; and this he did with his own hand, speaking at the same time in the most soothing and consolatory manner. All but five could swallow it: these were too far gone: the passage to the stomach being closed by the eruption, died that evening, as did seven more about eight hours after. The others happily received benefit from what they had taken, and it is hoped they will recover; on our return, Father Pablo thanked me for going with him; as it might, he said, shew to the Fathers who accompanied us, the necessity there was for them to adopt the same means on the like occasion, and to apply the same remedies; for here, said he, it is not the custom to attempt any thing that may be termed physical aid to the Indians. When they are struck with any disease, they are immediately set apart from the others, and left in their huts to live or die, as it shall please God to ordain: And, I am certain, that, had not our good Superior been here, these poor men would have experienced the common fate. This cruel negligence is invariably practised by these good catho-

lics, as they are falsely named. I lose all my patience when I think of it.

The president gets worse: it is expected he cannot live. Ah! my friend, were I to attend the death-bed of this great man, or rather, grand man, for I cannot for the life of me attach the word great to any man whose riches and rank are his only claims: no, no; he only is great, whose private life supports the character of a real Christian, and the universal friend of the human race,—were I, as I observed, to attend the last moments of this man, and draw a contrast between him and the last moments of the poor Indian, what a momentous difference: the one, resigning his last breath without the smallest dread, the cross his only hope and consolation; the other, all agitation, distrust, and fear, as he makes his confession to one of his ghostly Fathers who presumptuously dares to assure him of pardon for his sins, according to the price he is disposed to give for it. O this is something that calls aloud for reformation; and the time, I trust, is fast approaching, when the merchandise of priests will be totally done away, and the plain path to heaven be laid open to every one. I dwell on this hope with a kind of enthusiastic transport.

Should my countrymen happily establish liberty

here ; here then will the pure apostolic faith grow and flourish ; for none would more eagerly promote its growth than the emancipated Indians ; who, feeling the most exalted sense of gratitude for the uncontrolled blessings they enjoy, would soon be brought to adopt the customs, manners, and faith of their liberators. They would see and be anxious to become a connected people, they would feel and enjoy the blessings of society in wide and extended union ; towns would soon be raised, domestic arrangements become general, the advantages of trade and commerce would be opened to their view, and they would shortly learn properly to appreciate the blessings of nature with which they are so amply surrounded. Chili is particularly calculated to promote a great and glorious establishment on British principles. The Indians would soon become attached to domestic habits ; and none would more readily enter into them than they would, as thinking it the first obligation it was their duty to discharge, to follow, without the least constraint, the example set them by their immortal liberators. Then, what a wide field of commerce would open to Britain, since the works of every artizan would find here a ready sale, unclogged with state duties, or any drawback upon genius or enterprise, and here the artizan would find a welcome

reception, and a great and daily increasing reward for his labour.

I felt a strong conviction, that all my theories might be easily put in practice, and all realized; provided the Indians were once more masters of their country, and at liberty to act without any coercion, or the fear of having their liberators become their tyrants. Make them free, and leave them at liberty to reward their benefactors as they should think most proper, without exacting from them any remuneration, and I think I could pledge my life that they would not think the whole of their mines sufficient to recompense them. I draw this conclusion, my friend, from the personal observations I have made, and what I have read of their history. Combining these, I feel assured that I cannot be deceived; and feeling, as I do, an earnest desire to promote the arts and manufactures of my native land, which excel all others on the face of the earth, can I do otherwise than hope with confidence, that this great and rich continent may at length be opened to us and us alone. And whilst the groveling minds of European princes are engaged in forming plans to aggrandize a few, and cut the throats of each other, our country, I trust, will be more meritoriously engaged, not in extension of territory, but in opening the

road to still more wide and extended commerce. The Spaniards were certainly ordained by Heaven to be the first that should conquer, or, at least, carry their arms hither, to enslave and destroy till the anger of the Almighty was appeased, and an atonement made for the sins of the people, by the sacrifices daily offered up by the Spaniards: so that at length by their cruelty and oppression, they might pave the way for a more just and upright nation to become the advocates of suffering millions, who would quickly learn to contrast those beneficent mortals with their enslavers, and be transported to receive and obey them.

You may, perhaps, condemn me, as drawing too hasty conclusions; therein you may be right, but, when I take up an idea, I like to pursue it through all its connexions and ramifications, as I have done in this matter; and the more I reflect on the possible result, the more I am convinced that it can and will be realized. The Spaniards have been to these people what the Egyptians were to the Jews, and, as the instruments of the Almighty, have they exercised dominion over them, but their time of dominion, like that of the Egyptians, was limited; when Omnipotence decreed the oppression, he decreed also the time of its duration. The Spaniards, at the period of the first discovery of America, were regarded

by all the European nations as the most zealous and most ardent defenders of the cause of Christ; they either were, or pretended to be, the only true and steadfast assertors of the christian faith, and, to maintain which, they were, on every occasion, the first to come forward with fire and sword to destroy all that in any manner dissented from their belief. Every thing they said, did, or designed, was all done in the name of Jesus and Mary. If all their professions of faith were real and unfeigned, then did the Almighty decree, that, to try their faith, the discovery of this new world should be given to them, wherein they might sow and reap the most unbounded harvest in the vineyard of Christ, and wherein the grand struggle between God and Mammon should be decided.

The principal avowed motive of the Spanish monarchs for sending out Columbus, was the hope of finding a people who knew not God, and who might, by their means, be made acquainted with salvation, and that a Saviour had bled upon the cross to save sinners from everlasting death. This was the ostensible reason that led the first discoverers to announce to the natives the grand motive for seeking their shores. Had it been really so, the Spanish monarchs would have been long since the universal sovereigns of the world. But they soon, too soon, forgot their

errand, and became at once the most vile and infamous apostates. The mild and beneficent laws of a Redeemer, the precepts he enjoined, and the example himself and his disciples had set, were all regarded as nought when put in competition with gold, to obtain which, was the only desire of their souls, and whose eternal welfare was staked to possess it. But Omnipotence forbore for a time, to cause them to return from whence they came. They were to remain till a fixed period was elapsed, as a divine scourge upon the natives, and no less a scourge to themselves. But the time is now fast approaching, when those that set in darkness and the shadow of death, shall burst at once their adamantine chains, and awake, as from a dream, to light and life, when every prophecy of Jesus shall be finally and literally fulfilled, as also those of the apostles. Adieu.

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LETTER XIII.

I WAS last evening passing down the Cannada in company with a lay Brother of the order of Merced, when we were attracted to the banks of the canal, by seeing a number of people earnestly engaged in something that engrossed their whole attention. When we came near, we were surprised to see a delicate young female, stretched apparently lifeless on the grass, close to the canal, from which she had been taken a few minutes before. Her dress announced her a novice of the nunnery of Sancta Clara. A lay Brother of the order of St. Austin was kneeling, and holding one of her hands. His grief appeared to be too great for utterance; though I knew not the reason, my heart truly sympathized in his sorrow; my companion appeared to be even more affected than myself. We stood for some time silent, as did almost every one that was near. There were several ecclesiastics approaching; one of whom addressed me, and asked, whether I had not more respect for the order than to profane it in such a manner, by standing silent, and not sending to the Alguasil

Mayor. I recovered my speech, on this attack, and told his Reverence I was wholly unconscious of being wanting in respect to that of Sancta Clara, or any other order, and altogether unacquainted with the subject before us. He looked at me attentively, but said nothing. I looked round for my companion; but he was gone, neither could I see him in the street. I was puzzled in what manner to take myself away, as, thinking for the moment, that I was in England, and might be subject to be examined by a coroner's jury, seeing, as I supposed, the lady had drowned herself: but I was presently relieved from all apprehensions of that kind, by seeing my brother of the Merced advancing, and, with him, some of the Alguasil's officers and fathers of St. Austin. They immediately took the young man into custody, and marched him off, followed by the priests, while the inanimate lady was laid on a kind of couch. Not doubting but I should be informed of the reason for the lady drowning herself, by some of those that had been gathered round her, I addressed myself to an elderly gentleman, and politely asked him to explain it: but he, like the priest, turned, and surveying me from head to foot, with a most scrutinizing glance, tucked up the tassel of his cloak, and walked off. This tacit mode of answering a simple question roused my curiosity to know

the meaning. I therefore turned to an old lady, whom I concluded would most assuredly comply with my wishes, although it was in the street, and in the face of the sun, which had not then bade this part of the world good night : but she was still more obdurate and silent than the rest, and what was still worse, she did not even vouchsafe me a look, but walked up the street with more spirit and agility than I had ever seen a Spanish lady put on before : this perplexed me still more. I addressed myself to four others, but with the same success : I began, therefore, to think the goddess of silence had issued her mandate, that none should dare to gratify my desire. Well, said I to myself, be it so, I care not ; what is withheld from me to-day will be granted to-morrow, so I will think no more about it ; and on I walked under the shade of the willows which grow along the sides of the canal. The willows here grow to a surprising height and size, as does the myrtle, with which the willows are intermixed. Thus I paced along, not a little irritated to think I could not unravel the mystery : that there was one, I was well persuaded, else why that silence, or why was I shunned both by man and woman : or is it all a fairy dream, a waking vision, or has the moon rolled over my brain, and cracked it ? All these and a thousand more vagaries en-

tered my head before I had well reached the end of the walk. I had advanced, without being conscious of it, much farther than I had ever been before; and should still have continued going on, had not a voice arrested my attention: it was soft and plaintive, and in the Indian tongue, which I knew not. I paused, and looked round to see from whence it came, but I could see no one. The voice ceased, and, after a short pause, I heard a man say in very good Tuscan: "It will do, Clara; it will, it will, it must; you know very well, that if Don Francisco arrives before your brother, every hope will then be gone; therefore, let me entreat you to take advantage of the only moments that can ever possibly offer. We can be at Valpariso much sooner than they can, and we shall be able to get on board without the least suspicion, and, once there, nothing further can be feared or wished, for I have secured all; so that we shall not have the least occasion for delay, and the master has undertaken to sail within an hour after we are on board. You will have nothing to fear; keep up your spirits, and thus support the character you appear in, for you cannot want to be assured of the delightful welcome you will receive at Lima. My mother could think or talk of nothing else, my sisters

too, you know their hearts, and what kind and tender girls they are ; all will be in raptures at your arrival for the future happiness of the best of mothers, as well as my own, depends upon it ; do not, then, I implore you, any longer hesitate, but come this moment with me ; you will drive me to distraction if you deny ; and I here most solemnly swear by the Holy Virgin, I will not survive your refusal, therefore, come, I pray you."

The lady spake again in the same language, and, by the tone of her voice, I concluded she was weeping. " It is no use, Clara, you have gone too far to recede now, and go you must, unless you prefer seeing me dead at your feet : you know my resolution, and what, at all times, I dare ; you, therefore, cannot suppose that, in this momentous crisis of my life, I will act with less resolution than I have hitherto done. The mules are but a short distance, under the garden wall of St. Dominic, and one of the Fathers will accompany us for a few leagues : he is one in whom I can confide, and will take care that you are not missed before the bell for dinner." The lady spoke again, her voice less tremulous than before, when the gentleman said, " Come then, my angel, for, by the time we get yonder, it will be dark." The lovers then moved onwards ; I followed the

voice, but could see no one. The lady was speaking very earnestly, and you know not how much I regretted that she also did not speak the Tuscan, which I much wondered at, as she must have been well acquainted with it. I followed this ignis fatuus above a quarter of a mile, and in a part of the suburbs of the city which I knew nothing of. However, on I went, determined, at all hazards, to see the lovers off. I knew not where St. Dominic's monastery was situated; that it was a numerous society, and in connexion with that at Buenos Ayres, was all my acquaintance with it. But it was dark before I reached the east angle of a wall, which I concluded must be the boundary of St. Dominic's. Here I halted, under some orange-trees, and listened to hear the voices; but it was some minutes before I could hear them; and that, as if they had gone out of the path, they had been passing to one more to the north-east, while I was got into a thicket, and knew not how to get out, in order to catch the sound which I found to be more distant. Bewildered and confounded, I should, most assuredly, have been obliged to have remained there all night, had not an Indian, belonging to the very people I was in pursuit of, given a signal, which I supposed to have been the one directed by the gentleman, he supposing the

bustle I made among the leaves and trees to get out was his master. However, before he was undeceived, I heard the gentleman's voice at no great distance, advancing apparently near to where I stood, as I could guess by his voice. He spoke in the Indian language, and was answered in the same by the man; the lady, likewise, said something to him; and they all three went on together. I was, by their movements, convinced, that I could not be far from the path under the wall, and instantly made a grand push through the thicket to get to it, which I happily effected, but not without tearing my garments: luckily for me, the ground was thickly covered with leaves and blossoms, so that my footsteps were not heard, and I followed at no great distance from the runaways, not without a hope that I should see them when they came to mount; but in this I was disappointed, for when they reached to the opposite end of the enclosure which had been on the left, they suddenly turned the corner, and, before I could come up, they were mounted. Three mules passed on in the opposite direction, at a quick pace, and a single one remained with a man for about ten minutes, as if placing something on the mule, for though I could not see him, I heard him busily engaged; no one had spoken but the Indian after they turned the corner of

the wall; and, as the man was adjusting something, I heard him in Spanish anathematize a wine-bottle. I therefore concluded, that the lover, the lady, and the priest, were gone on, and this was the Indian charged with the provisions for the journey, and that all my labour was lost, and I was in a pretty situation; to get out of which, it was necessary to be informed of the best means to return to St. Francis. I, therefore, retired back some little way, and then advanced singing a part of the evening service. The Indian was, in an instant, close to me, when I pretended to be surprised at finding him there. He answered, in very good Spanish, that he was servant to Captain Pedro Aquirre, and was going to an Estancia about two leagues distant; that something had got wrong on the mule's saddle, and he had stopped to set it to rights. I affected to believe what he said, and bade him set me right to regain the Cannada. He said, I was a long step from it, for I was in the wood of St. Bruno. I asked him to return through the wood with me, as far as the entrance to the Cannada. This, he said, he could not do, as he had stayed too long already, being obliged to be at the Estancia by nine o'clock; but he would mount, and go with me to the end of the wall, and then direct me as well as he could. This was poor encouragement for

me, and before we came to the end of the garden, I had made up my mind to stick myself in a thicket till day-light, when the sound of the matin-bell would direct me. It was the first time I had ever been led astray by curiosity, to pry into other people's concerns, and I had fully determined it should be the last, notwithstanding I had two hours before resolved to come at the secret of the drowned lady; but this evening was certainly to be one of adventures to one who never had any taste for them; for I am well convinced I should make a very sorry knight-errant, more particularly in affairs of the heart, and, being among the descendants of the first knight-errants of Europe, I should most assuredly cut a most lamentable figure; therefore, I shall be content at having, without designing it, made one essay towards obtaining so gallant a character. The Indian completed his engagement, and left me at the end of the garden wall, with a flourish of his bell-whip, and bawling out, Hurrah mula hurrah.

Now, had I happened to have been a lover of the fifteenth century, these woods, and wilds, and umbrageous shades, would have been the very essence of place and time: but, alas! I was three hundred years too young to be enraptured with the sombre scene, and therefore wished, most heartily wished, that I could change it for the

portico of the Franciscan church. I made, however, the best of my way, agreeable to the Indian's direction; but still I seemed to be as far from the mark as at first. At length, the moon arose, and I discerned through the wood a wide opening at no great distance from the spot I had been traversing for above two hours: most joyfully did I leap over the impediments that stood in my way, and found I was some way on the Cannada. How I could miss the path the Indian told me I should find, is to me most mysterious, for I must absolutely have gone over it several times.

As soon as I reached home, the porter announced the hour to be two in the morning, that the Fathers had been informed of my absence which no one could account for, and that two of the lay Brothers were then out in search of me, fearing some accident had befallen me; while Father Pablo had ordered that he should be sent to the moment any intelligence was gained, for he was extremely alarmed, as I had always been so very remarkable for my punctuality in attending to college hours. I hastened instantly to his room, his servant was reading to him, for he could not rest: and surely no real parent could express more lively joy at finding a lost son, than this excellent and good man evinced when he saw me

enter ; and the more as seeing my robe torn to tatters, and my face scratched in a most delectable manner. For the holy Virgin's sake, said he, tell me, my child, where have you been, and into what dreadful hands have you fallen. Seeing him so much agitated, I was angry with myself for coming before him in the miserable plight I was in, for ever since the affair at Rioja, the mention of a roving tribe, has an effect upon him that he can with difficulty recover. I, therefore, related my adventure as soon as possible, which set his mind at rest ; late as it was he would have me relate over again, the affair of the lovers in St. Bruno's wood. When I had been more particular, he crossed himself several times, and seemed lost in deep thought for some minutes : at last he said, Are you sure, my child, that you were not seen by any one of the parties themselves ? I assured him that I did not think I had been, and I had related every thing that had passed as near as it was possible for me to remember ; I did not think I had either added to or diminished any part of the conversation. That's well, said he, and it is my wish that you do not by any means whatever drop a hint that you was at all in the wood, for if it should be the party that from some particular circumstances I am induced to think it may be, you might be seriously implicated in the business ; to-morrow we shall hear something about

the affair, if it is as I suspect ; and I draw my conclusion from the lady's name. Should it be her real one, the lady I have in my thoughts has four, but her third is Clara ; but go you now to bed, and as none has seen you but the porter, we must account for your torn gown and injured face, by merely saying you got unadvisedly into an affair that you do not chuse to make known ; I shall dispense with seeing you to-morrow, keep in your room, let the officer of the infirmary attend you ; but, be silent to him, and remain in your room till I either come or send to you, I will give you my reasons for this caution after I return from the palace ; God bless thee, my son, good night.

With this truly good man's benediction, I took myself to rest, and in the morning I sent to the hospital : the officer of the infirmary who attended, was surprised at the rueful appearance I made, which was more in appearance than reality ; however, I was fain to consent to be let blood. He remarked that my hands were also hurt, but I laughed at all of it : he was, however, very serious upon the business, as thinking me very ill, and that such rencontres were often attended with very bad consequences. Seeing he was disposed to apprehend I should have a fever, I thought it best to fall in with his opinion, and to take whatever he thought proper to prescribe ; thus you see how I was punished for my idle curiosity. The two lay Brothers did not return till

after morning prayer, without having obtained the smallest information : they could not hear of me any where, as I had not been to any of the families I was accustomed to visit, and had I not returned before them, the consequences might have proved very unfortunate to the brother of the Merced with whom they had learned that I was last seen. They had also been informed I was in the Cannada at the time the lady was taken away, and away they posted to the office of the Alguasil mayor ; but here no tidings were to be had : away then to St. Austin's monastery, here they were as much in the dark as before ; I was not there. Then to the order of the Merced, but neither the Brother or any he had been seen with, was in the house ; of course I was not there, nor could they gain any satisfactory intelligence respecting the catastrophe of the lady ; every one to whom they applied for information, was as silent to them as to me : all they had been able to obtain, was from an artizan, who resided on that side of the street close to the river, or rather canal. He happened to be in a loquacious mood, and was one of the first that ran out to assist in trying to get the lady out of the water which is by no means deep ; and the moment the alarm was given many ran to the spot, and she was instantly taken out, but he could not tell how she got in ; all that he knew was, that she was seen to come out of one of the

shops with a small basket in her hand followed by an old lady. As soon as she came to the opposite side, she threw down the basket, and was lost in a minute. The old lady made an alarm ; there was a great many passing at the time, but no one could say they saw her jump in, and the crowd soon gathered ; but none was so much affected as the young novice who held her hands, and wept so bitterly ; but none could tell who he was, or where he came from so suddenly, for he was almost the first that came up ; but he spoke to no one, nor did the old lady, or an old gentleman that spoke to her, and her only ; by which the crowd thought it was her father and mother : and so many priests were so soon arrived, that every one was afraid to ask any questions as the young lady appeared to belong to them, as well as the young man that grieved so much. The lady was carried back to her nunnery, and the novice to his, or the Alguasil mayor, he could not tell which : and thus every body was as much in the dark as myself ; and in which I am like to remain, for every one attached to the church, and church matters, are spoke of here with the utmost reserve. I must, therefore, from all this silence, conclude it to be a love affair, and that in the true spirit of Spanish romance. As to the affair in St. Bruno's wood, I may stand a chance to have it elucidated, though I remain a prisoner in my room ; by the hints Father Pablo

dropt, and the anxiety he expressed to have me be silent on this subject to all but him, he certainly knows some of the parties, or he would not fear to have me implicated in the business. This bleeding and physician is not altogether to my taste; however, I drew this consolation from it, that whatever seeds of curiosity I might have had in my composition previous to my eaves-dropping, I can declare upon my honour, there is not now one atom remaining: I shall ever remain content with seeing as much as I can at one glance, and of listening to just as much as might arrest attention, *en passant*, and no further; especially where the blind god is in the case, for follow him but for a moment, and he is sure to lead you into mischief; out of which it is no easy matter to get, as I suppose my companion of the Merced will by this time find as well as me; for here, as I have, I believe, observed to you before, nothing is followed up with so much spirit as gallantry; the whole life and soul of a Spanish woman or mesteez, is wholly and solely intrigue whether at home or abroad, in church or out of church, by day or by night, 'tis all one to the señoras: be in love you must, or pretend to it at first sight; if left alone but for a moment with a lady, if you do not take advantage of that moment to tell her how much and how ardently you adore her; your credit among the ladies is gone for ever: therefore, if you mean to





MERCHANTS' LADIES OF CHILI.



stand fair with them and keep up your reputation, you must with all the warmth of an impassioned lover, press for an assignation, and assure her unless she grants it, that you must without redemption expire at her feet. In public, where I have been, I have often witnessed such scenes: the cavaliers are adepts in the science; the religious are privileged men, they manage things in a different manner; they have no occasion to make known their sentiments in this fashion, for if I guess right the ladies spare them the trouble. Now as to your wife, I know what she will say when you read this: "what a scandalous character this friend of yours is become, how profanely he talks of the ladies; sure it can never be as he says." But I declare upon my honour, I relate no more than plain fact, and which I earnestly wish you was here to ascertain. I have had already numerous affairs upon my hands, out of which I have got as well as I could, although I am well persuaded that many of the ladies I have had the honour to be in friendship with, never entertained any ideas beyond those of rectitude and honour. The credit of a love affair was all they aimed at, and the pleasure they derive in hearing themselves flattered. Now you know I am poor at hyperbole and compliments of any kind, therefore my habit is a most fortunate thing to help me out upon all occasions. The dress of the merchants' ladies here is, in a

great measure, like that worn at Buenos Ayres ; retaining the Spanish hat and feather, with the hair flowing beneath the shawl. They wear the petticoats much longer than those worn at Buenos Ayres, yet they are of such light materials that the form of the leg is easily seen ; the bosom is not covered unless they are going out, a long veil of lace or muslin richly embroidered with gold or silver is put on, which envelopes the head and falls in various folds over the body : these folds the ladies of St. Jago know well how to arrange, so as to display their persons to the greatest advantage : when in their balconies, to see the Orders pass, every one is dressed in her best apparel, as also at the bull feasts. This last I have never witnessed since the one I was at at Lisbon ; I think I there wrote you I would never see another, and I shall most assuredly keep my word : how ladies can delight in being present at such horrid sacrifices as a bull feast and an auto da fé, is to me a problem I could never solve ; and although a man, I absolutely shiver when I think on the grand place at Lisbon ; that scene, my friend, will never be forgot. It might be deemed a weakness ; be it so, I could never from a child bear to see the least cruelty exercised over any part of the animal creation, and, much more over man woman or child that was defenceless : this makes me conclude that the

Spaniards were permitted to be the first to conquer this country, as being more cruel in their natural dispositions.

The tradesmen's wives bear a proportionate appearance, but always, more or less, with some attention to ornament: they also derive no small attraction from the coquettish air with which they envelop the upper part of their figure.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM still confined to my room, and it is given out, I understand, that I am ill of a fever, of a longer duration than when I was last in the Canada. What purpose this rumour will serve, I cannot imagine: if I have a fever it is absolutely unknown to myself; but my good Superior will have it so, and I must acquiesce: he visits me daily, and this morning stayed above two hours, during which we had a long conversation respecting the presidencies in the neighbourhood of the Conception. He was twice about to relate something particular respecting the Lord Bishop's going thither on his visitation as metropolitan; the Bishop of the Conception it seems presses earnestly for this visit, hoping the presence of the head of the church will be of eminent service, to place some new regulation on a permanent basis. There is also a design of sending to Europe a procurator general: Father Pablo is apprehensive that he shall be named, which he is much averse to, as there have not been any certain accounts from those who are already there, and he is of too

meek and righteous a spirit, to mix with apostates at Rome, or such as favour the French. Calmness and retirement best suits him ; I cannot learn the cause that obliges him to accompany the Bishop in this long journey ; but I earnestly hope he will go, that I may have the happiness to accompany him. To-morrow it seems he shall know something that immediately concerns the object of their journey ; as also the time of their setting out. The president or governor is better, but not out of danger ; though he has, I presume, purchased his passport, and obtained free leave to quit the world without any concern to himself, leaving the whole of that business in the management of his confessor. My lord bishop will not now be detained here, but go to the summer palace in the valley, there to complete the marriage of his niece, which our holy Father, it seems, has much at heart ; and then for the Conception. Whilst I am confined I shall endeavour to arrange all the intelligence I have obtained respecting the islands belonging to Chili, that is to say, those which come under its jurisdiction ; that as soon as I can pursue the translation, I may furnish you with such accounts of them as may be relied on ; but till I am pronounced convalescent, I shall not be able to visit the library ; therefore, I can only at present arrange what I have got from oral tradition, some of which is by no means trivial. In a few

days a messenger will go from hence, to our convent at Buenos Ayres ; he is to be charged with despatches of particular moment, both from the spiritual and temporal commanders : and he will also, by Father Pablo's consent, take my despatches in the box, made at Rioja, which though not quite so well filled as that of Pandora with the like commodities, is yet full enough the Spaniards would think, were they to open it, and let out a little of its contents ; but of that I have no fear, Don Manuel having most kindly provided against all suspicion. He, good soul, is too much of an Englishman, and likes the Indians too well, to betray any trust reposed in him, and would be, I am well assured, a most valuable auxiliary could my hopes and wishes be realized, of obtaining to the Indians their long lost charter ; and if it please God to restore me once more to freedom, there is nothing I would not attempt, to drive home those that have so long oppressed an innocent and unoffending people. The more I see of the various nations of Indians, the more I am convinced they are of Tartar origin ; that is to say, those who inhabit the north eastern parts of Asia. If I recollect aright what I read some years since, respecting the Tongusian Tartars, the Indians of Paraguay and Chili are most assuredly descendants of that nation ; if we may draw conclusions from the physical and moral habits of both. The Tongusians

worship the sun as their tutelar deity, so do many nations of Indians ; the Tartars pay the strictest obedience to their parents, and their princes, as well as the highest reverence to age ; so does the Indian : the Tartar purchases his wife of her parents ; so does the Indian : the same ceremonies, and the same affectionate veneration for the dead are alike observable in both ; the same heroic spirit and ardent love of liberty, the same kind of wandering and unsettled life, all alike portray the same origin. But at what port or by what means they reached this immense continent, has never yet been ascertained by any writers on the subject ; for although many learned men, of all the different nations of Europe, have, at various periods, written much, and very pertinently, and started many probable theories, yet they have, some how or other, contrived to leave it as much in dispute at the end, as at the beginning : for even Antonio Herrera, the most diffuse of all the Spanish writers, and who appears to have taken great pains to come at the truth, abruptly closes his one and twentieth chapter, with this trite observation ; that men as well as animals passed either by land or by water to America, near some part where it joins to the other parts of the world, either by the Tierra de Bacalaos, (that is to say, countries unknown) or by the Straits of Magellan. Father Acosta, who also treats the same subject,

in his twenty-second chapter, of the first book, says, "I take my conclusions from hints thrown out by Plato, in his *Timaeus*; that people passed from Europe and Africa, to certain islands, and so from one to another, till they reached the terra firma of America; not by any actual knowledge they might have had of these parts, but by means of storms, they often had to encounter in very small ships, which might drive them against their will, into parts unknown, and where they were obliged to remain, as not knowing the latitude they were in, or the use of the compass, or any other aids which modern navigators possess." St. Austin, in his sixteenth book, *De Civitate Dei*, draws this very curious conclusion, respecting the animals peculiar to America: that they might either swim thither, be carried by hunters, or created anew after the deluge by God Almighty. Thus much for great and learned authors. The event of a deluge is believed by all the different nations of Indians which have yet been discovered, although they do not exactly agree as to the manner of it. The nation of the Guancas, who inhabit the rich valley of Xavea, tell you, that many years before there were Incas or kings among them, the country being extremely populous; on a sudden there came great and mighty rains, which buried all the earth, and its inhabitants except six, who took shelter in the hollows of

their highest mountain, and after the waters had left the earth, and made the great sea, they descended to the valleys, and again peopled the earth. This tradition is also received by the natives of Peru, and some part of Chili ; but the Indians, inhabiting the mountains, dissent from this opinion, and assert that none could be saved in the mountains, because they were all covered with water, but that six were saved in a float they made, on which they lived till the waters had gone away and made the great sea. All the nations uniformly hold this opinion, that the sea was formed from the waters of the deluge: how far they may be right I shall not take upon me to say, but leave it to the more learned to discuss this point. It is ocular demonstration that determines me to conclude, that the first people who inhabited America after the deluge, certainly derived their origin from the Tartars, or Scythians: nothing more strongly indicates the probability of such a descent, than the manner in which the Americans bury their dead, the tender regard they have for the memory of their ancestors, their lamentations over and exterior respect for the dead. The rich clothes and valuable arms which the deceased possessed, are uniformly buried with him, and the place where the body is laid, is held in the highest veneration. It is known, that they frequently, when removing from the place where

their father or brother lie buried, surround the grave, and beg his pardon for leaving him behind them. They will also return and bring as an offering the choicest of their game, which they may take in hunting : this they perform, though it may be many months after. They also open the dead bodies to learn the occasion of their death, and ask the dead a variety of questions, when they cannot clearly ascertain the immediate cause of it ; as whether any one injured him, or vexed him, or his wife displeased him, or his children proved disobedient, and a great many other to the same purpose. All this the Tartars of the first class invariably observe ; and, like the Americans, or the Americans like them, pay adoration to the Sun, as their chief God ; for they believe in the ancient mythology, assigning to inferior deities the whole direction of their lives. But the South Americans in general, believe the immortality of the soul, although at the same time, they pay no particular homage, or external worship, either to God or devil. They give the name of mother to the moon, and honour her as such : when she is eclipsed, they are in the greatest horror and confusion, running into the fields, shrieking and howling ; armed with their bows and arrows, and, arranging themselves in close columns, instantly discharge their arrows in the air to defend her, they say, from the wild beasts and dogs that have fallen on her ; and they

continue shooting their arrows as long as the eclipse continues, to prevent her from being torn to pieces. This they take to be the cause of the darkness over the moon's body ; and if my memory deceives me not, I think the several nations of Asia entertain similar notions of the lunar eclipses as the Americans, which is a still further confirmation of my hypothesis. I am also of opinion that the emigration to America, by whatever means it was brought about, was most certainly subsequent to the death of our Saviour. For among the nation of the Manacicas, there is discoverable many traits of knowledge, that implies a former acquaintance with divine truth, though now lost and buried in fable. According to traditions handed down to them from time immemorial, they believe that a lady of exquisite beauty conceived formerly, without any operation of man ; that she brought forth a most beautiful boy ; that this child having attained a certain age, filled the world with astonishment and admiration at his virtue, wisdom, and the various prodigies that he performed, that all the nations in the world wished to live with him, and to serve him ; but that he did not long remain among them ; for one day, in the midst of a very great crowd of disciples and followers, he ascended into the air, and instantly transformed himself into this sun which shines upon us ; and that were it not for

the vast distance, his features would still be visible. Notwithstanding this principle of the Manaciccian belief, they do not adore the sun ; they hold three gods and one goddess ; who, they say, is the spouse of the first, and mother of the second, whom they call Urasana, and the goddess Quipoci. They hold that these gods now and then appear among them, under various figures, when they are assembled in the hall of their Cacique, to dance and make merry according to custom. A loud rolling noise, resembling thunder, announces their approach ; when this is heard, the people instantly break off their dancing, and welcome him with the loudest acclamations of joy, that subside the moment he begins to speak ; which is always to bid them to eat and drink heartily, as he will give them plenty of good things to carouse and be merry withal : then he takes a bowl of chica from the Cacicque, and drinks heartily, not only once but many times ; but his drinking is behind a curtain that always hangs in the hall of the Cacique, behind which none dare enter as an attendant upon the god, and to present the chica, but the Mapona or Priest, who is always sure to be at the head of all the grand feasts, as well as in readiness to attend upon the god Urasana ; for neither the cacique or any of his great men dare even look behind the curtain, lest they should offend their god. None but the prin-

cial Mapona dare enter there ; that part of the hall being considered as most sacred. Sometimes the Mapona, from behind the curtain, puts questions to the god, concerning future events ; when a general silence prevails, no one presuming to speak till the Mapona comes forth ; when, he pronounces favourable answers or denunciations from the gods, according to the nature of the questions, or rather according to the will or humour of the priests.

Sometimes the Indians believe the Mapona, when absent, has taken a journey to heaven, to fetch the goddess Quipoci to comfort and bless them. She announces her arrival by singing some pleasing air, when the assembly shew their gratitude for the visit by lively demonstrations of joy, and their respect and love for the deity. She answers them in the kindest manner, calling them her children, and assuring them, that she will constantly protect them from all dangers whenever they will call upon her, as her affection for them is unbounded. This they steadfastly believe, and never fail to supplicate her in all their wants and calamities. They also believe in the immortality of the soul, and that when it leaves the body, it is conducted to heaven by the Mapona, there to live eternally in joy and delight. When an Indian of quality dies, the Mapona is not seen for some time : when he again

appears, to inform them of the long and tedious journey he has had in conveying the soul to mansions of eternal bliss. This journey, he says, is very troublesome, for it lies through thick forests, high, craggy, and steep mountains, deep valleys, full of vast lakes and pools, and over a very broad river, with a wooden bridge, guarded night and day by the god Tartateso. This deity is not unlike the Charon of the poets, his business being to purify the souls from all stains contracted in their life past; and if any fail in due respect, or endeavour to impose upon him by a false account of their lives, he throws them immediately into the river, there to sink for ever. The Mapona, at his return, gives a long account of his journey, and the trouble he has had to save any one from being thrown into the river, especially if the deceased has not been generous and kind when living; but he never fails to say, he, at length, succeeded in getting his departed friend well placed in heaven, and for which he is always sure of a good reward. In some parts, the Maponas are the preservers of the body as well as the soul, and pretend to cure all diseases. To be admitted a professor of physic, the candidate must produce a personal certificate of his qualifications; that is to say, he must shew by scars on his body, that he has had different engagements with wild

beasts, such as tigers, wolves, &c., and he who can shew the most unequivocal signs of this prowess is certain to obtain his diploma, not from a college of physicians, but an assembly of Indians, and it is always considered as a very lucrative employ. In some districts the Cacique himself is the principal physician, and not unfrequently rivals the Mapona, being oftener called in on extraordinary occasions than the others; and this partiality very often creates jealousies that are not easily appeased: but both the one and the other know but of two methods of cure in all cases, both very monstrous and extravagant. The first method consists in examining or rather interrogating the patient, where he has been of late; whether he has let any chica fall to the ground, (a great crime with them,) or if he has thrown a piece of venison, tortoise, or other animal to the dogs. If so, there needs no other inquiry into the cause of the disorder: the gods punish, in this manner, the abuse of their blessings; or else it is the soul of some animal which, resenting the ill usage it has met with while upon earth, is got into the body of the patient. This last idea, I think, has certainly some, though very remote, reference to the man possessed with devils, whom our Saviour relieved, and commanded the evil spirits to enter into the herd of

swine. The doctor sucks the place where the principal pain is felt; then he wheels about his patient in a circle all the time, striking violently the ground with a large club, till the violence of the motion exhausts both patient and doctor, when perforce he leaves off: this is to drive away the evil spirit with which his patient is possessed. By this mode of practice we may well presume the patient is not much mended, and has nothing to depend upon but the strength of his constitution. The other way is barbarous in the extreme, but has really, in my opinion, a near affinity to our received opinion of witchcraft, as springing from one and the same original. When a patient's complaints are such that they cannot readily divine the cause, the patient, or the doctor, fixes upon some woman whom they have offended, as the ostensible cause of the malady. As soon as this opinion is made known to the family, nothing more is requisite to perfect a cure than to go and dispatch the unhappy creature, which is always performed by the patient himself, or his next of kin. The experience and persuasion of the missionaries ought to have convinced them that such recipes or prescriptions cannot possibly be of any service; yet, in spite of all argument, they still persist in the belief that distempers proceed entirely from external causes,

and not from any internal alteration in the system by the confluence of humours. Sovery much attached are they to old customs, that the missionaries have found it very difficult to make them see the ignorance and knavery of their pretended physicians. The Manacicians, although they have these established physicians, have likewise others whom they name Machi; that is to say, herb doctors, who are most certainly very skilful in the knowledge of herbs, and their application of them. Among these, the women are in some cases more eminent than the men, particularly in ascertaining the cause of internal diseases. In the library I saw a book belonging to the hospital, containing a long list of attested cures performed by these herb doctors: they are, it seems, in high repute, not only with the Indians, but with the Spaniards, who apply to them on all occasions, when their own skill fails. The knowledge they possess is, it seems, hereditary in some families, but they keep their knowledge most carefully from the Spaniards, but they do not refuse to attend them when called upon. Father Herran, in his medical reports, relates many surprising cures. Among others, he says, one of our order was for many years troubled with fainting fits, which would take him so suddenly that he was obliged to have a lay Brother constantly with him. He was about

thirty years of age, and had for the last seven or eight years tried all the learned prescriptions of the most skilful physicians, but all their prescriptions were useless. He yearly became worse and worse, and was reduced to a mere skeleton. By some chance, an Indian, who had seen him fall down, and violently hurt himself, told the Fathers that in his district there was an Indian machi, who would cure him immediately, if they could get him to come thither. The Fathers, anxious to relieve the brother, immediately sent off a messenger, with the Indian, to offer the machi a very great reward if he would come to the convent. By the persuasion of the Indian, he was prevailed upon, and soon came. When he had seen his patient, and without asking any questions, being told the nature of the complaint, with the length of time he had been affected, he produced a small packet of powders, and took from them about as much as would cover an inch square, which he put into a glass of wine, and gave it the Father, who, having drank it, felt immediately relieved, and never more was afflicted with the same disease, but continued in good health and spirits for the subsequent nine years he remained with us. Some of the Indians are particularly skilful in administering poison that wastes the body by degrees, but does not become mortal till the period they choose. Many

Spaniards have died from this only, and which none but the machis can cure. This they do by preparing the body for some days, by drinking herb infusions, of which they carefully watch the operation, and will tell to a few minutes when the poison will be evacuated. This dreadful poison, whatever it may be, is invariably brought off in a small round ball, curiously wound round with human hair. These balls are found of various sizes, some of them no bigger than a large pea, others as big as an hazel-nut; all in the end prove fatal, unless the machi's prescription is applied. Thus, I think the Manacicians are most certainly the absolute descendants of the first emigrants that reached those shores, and from them all the other nations originated. I could certainly, had I leisure, entertain you with more plausible reasons for my belief, but I must postpone them till my return to Buenos Ayres; and when that will be, God knows: I heartily wish it may not be long, when I am determined to make one grand effort to gain certain intelligence as to their success at Rioja, or endeavour to be sent there if I can; but for that event I must trust Heaven. Adieu.

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM this morning pronounced by my spiritual and temporal physicians to be absolutely in perfect health, and at liberty to go forth at large again; and what is more, I have acquired the secret of St. Bruno's wood, which I consider a desirable acquisition, or rather a reward for my confinement, and, indeed, the good Father Pablo thought so too. In a former letter, I informed you, that our journey to the Conception would commence immediately after the marriage of my Lord Bishop's niece, which, it is presumed, has taken place, though not exactly with the purposed bridegroom: for, be it known to you, that the lady who spoke in the Indian language to the gentleman in the wood is the very identical niece of his Lordship. My Superior was this morning so kind as to come to my room for the purpose of explaining the business. This lady's mother was the sole heiress of one of the most powerful of the Auracan caciques. She was, unfortunately, taken prisoner in an engagement

between the Spaniards and her father's people, who, although they were beaten back to the Imperial, yet succeeded in carrying her off. She was the only child left to her father; of five sons that he had, three had fallen in battle, and two by the small pox. The father, as soon as he was informed of the fate of his child, immediately set off for the Spanish garrison, with all his troops, and those of his next friend, with a determination to attack the fortress, and put every Spaniard to death, man, woman, or child, that might be found in it. They were not long in reaching the fort, to which he concluded his child had been taken. He immediately summoned it, and demanded his daughter. The Spaniards, contrary to their usual custom, answered the summons, not by their cannon, but a herald, with a message that the governor would restore the lady, and propose articles of peace that might secure to both parties all they could wish. Whilst the cacique was musing over this new kind of communication, and fearing for his child, well knowing the treachery of the Spaniards, he was surprised to see her conducted towards him by two Spanish officers, bearing a flag of truce. When they came near, she advanced before them, and, kneeling to her father, entreated him to listen to the proposals of the governor, who, as a proof of his sincerity, and determination to abide

by all that should be required, he had thought proper to set her instantly free, that she might be a mediator between them. She further said, that she had been treated with the greatest respect by them all, and, in particular, by one of those that accompanied her, who was son to the governor, and commanded the party which took her prisoner. The cacique possessed all the greatness of soul that marks the character of an upright man and hero, for he was one ; and more than once had the Spaniards felt the force of his arms, and been driven before him to take refuge in their forts, or they would have been totally routed in the field. He was the chief of all others they most dreaded. The sight of his child, and the assurance of her having been respected, gave to his heart the most grateful sensations, and, embracing her, he said, he would listen to what they had to say, and, if consistent with the future safety of his people, he would comply with their proposals. The usual time of eight days was fixed for the final answer, and, with his daughter, he took the route towards home. One of the articles was a proposition for the cacique to give his daughter in marriage to the son of the governor. This was an article that was long debated in the council that he called on the occasion ; but, at length, by the intercession of the young lady herself, it was agreed to, and peace

was finally made, on the marriage taking place three weeks after. That peace has been strictly observed by both parties ever since; although her father did not live long after, and the lady, having no brothers or near relations to join in subsequent affairs between the Spaniards and other neighbouring chiefs, the whole of that district belonging to her remained perfectly tranquil. There were two children of this marriage, a son and a daughter. Six years after the marriage, the governor, her father-in-law, was appointed governor of Lima, and his son lieutenant-governor. This arrangement caused them to remove to Peru, and when the boy attained his eighth year, he was contracted to a daughter of the late viceroy, and the young lady to one of his sons, which marriages were consummated; and, soon after, another son of the viceroy was married to a daughter of one of the native grandees of Lima. About this time, the present Lord Bishop of St. Jago was appointed to this see. He was brother to the governor's wife, who was a native of Lima. The lieutenant-governor did not long survive the completion of the marriage of his children, and his widow took the veil in a nunnery at Lima. The daughter lost her husband at the age of eighteen, leaving her three children under the guardianship of the present bishop of St. Jago. Before her year of mourning

was quite expired, several gallant Spaniards made her proposals; among them, an highly-accomplished Spaniard arrived at Lima from Old Spain as colonel of a troop of horse. His father had been viceroy, but was dead. His mother and sisters remained at Lima, but he had been sent to the court by his father's successor on affairs of a private nature. At his return, he was appointed lieutenant-governor, and, at the same time, became enamoured of the young widow, who, it should seem, was no less enamoured of him, and, as soon as time would permit, he made his pretensions known, and applied to the bishop for leave to address his niece, but he met with an abrupt refusal. In the mean time, her brother-in-law, or rather her late husband's brother, had repudiated his wife, and applied to the bishop, as the other had done, for leave to address the lady, which was immediately granted, and the lady received directions from his lordship to look upon her relative as her future husband; but the lady proved refractory, and positively refused to accept him, alleging, as an excuse, their being so nearly allied by marriage, and there being children on both sides, and the mother of his children still living. But all excuses were vain; her ghostly father was determined upon the match, and she was commanded to come to St. Jago, and remain in one of the

nunneries attached to St. Francis. The prelate's mandate was absolute, and she was obliged to obey. Hither then the lady and children came; and here she was to remain till a dispensation for the marriage arrived from Rome. In the mean time, the repudiated lady's family, considering her as very ill used, sent to Rome a messenger also, with every necessary document, to lay before his Holiness, to prevent the dispensation being obtained, backed also by a memorial from the family of the young lieutenant-governor. When I came to St. Jago, this was the situation in which matters stood, and with which Father Pablo made me acquainted; and that they much feared no dispensation would arrive, as they had heard some vague account of the perilous situation of his Holiness. But the bishop was so determined that the match should take place before he set out on his visitation, that every thing had been arranged for the purpose, and the day that the president was taken ill was the one fixed on to unite the young widow to a man that it is said she absolutely detested. It was to take place at the summer-palace, to which I informed you my Superior and myself were to have gone, to be present at the marriage-ceremony. Happy indeed was it for all parties, that the illness of one great man prevented its taking place. But, although it was obliged to be postponed by the

absence of the bishop, yet he still determined on its completion ; and the president getting better, the day was once more fixed, and was the very next to that of my affair in St. Bruno's wood, and which, as I told you, caused so much alarm to Father Pablo ; for, on my relating my adventure, he instantly comprehended the business and the result, he being certain it could be no other than the young widow and her lover at Lima, and he also drew a conclusion what a confusion and uproar would be at the palace as soon as her flight was known: he well knew also the vindictive spirit of his lordship, and the danger I should be in, was it to be known that I was in any manner acquainted with it. This was the reason he enjoined me silence, and directed my confinement as in a fever. It was well these precautions were taken, and that none knew of my adventure but the Father. There has been, it seems, a great many taken up as supposed aiders and abettors in her escape ; but so well was it managed by the lover, that not the smallest clue as yet has been found to clear up the mystery of her elopement. Every religious house in the city and its environs has been minutely searched, not having the least idea that she left the house before morning, and, by the time she was missed, the lovers must have been at Valpariso, and safe on board a ship ; and it is not

till yesterday that his lordship thought of sending to Valpariso. Thus you see the denouement of my adventure, and I earnestly hope the lovers are now far beyond the reach of arbitrary power.

His lordship has fixed the time for our departure for the Conception, to which he purposes to go direct, and visit the other cities on his return. I am to see him this evening, being one among the few he chooses to converse with on indifferent subjects. I am cautioned by Father Pablo not to hint that I am by any means acquainted with what has occurred respecting the lady. What an excellent and good man is this Superior of mine; the more I am with him, the more do I love and respect him: ten such men as him would redeem the whole nation. He studiously avoids speaking of the missions. My ever-lamented Father Hernandez seems constantly present to his mind. In him the good Superior lost the friend and companion of his youth: they were alike unhappy at their outset in life; both were doomed to meet with severe trials, which both bore with the most unshaken constancy for eighteen years. They were missionaries in the province of Uruguay, but though at the same time in the same province, they were six hundred miles apart; but yet found means to communicate their afflictions to each other, for, without such consolation,

they could not have lived. Believe me, my friend, I find more sincere and heartfelt pleasure in converse with this amiable man, than I ever felt at Rome, when surrounded by all the great philosophers, divines, and sophists. I listened to their learned jargon without feeling the smallest interest. I attended their conversazioni, only because it was the fashion; and heard, perhaps, a long dissertation on the leg of a fly, or the leg of something more vile, and all to display their erudition and their pride. Here, on the contrary, every conversation I hold with this truly learned and good man, teems with instruction and information.

I shall not, I fear, be able to complete my promise respecting Father Savedro at Mendoza, a suffering victim for the sins of his fathers; but I hope I shall at my return. You will feel an interest in his fate, for I think you in part knew his family. I mentioned him to Father Pablo, and find that he is not a stranger to the events that caused him to leave Europe. This good man expressed much concern at his unmerited fate. I had entertained a hope to have heard from him before I left St. Jago, but that cannot be now. Father Pablo has promised to aid me in arranging the missionary papers to send to you, with all the kindness of a parent.

Yesterday we held a long converse respecting the Indians, and of the first conquest of this country by the Spaniards. This is the only subject on which I ever hear him speak with acrimony. The cruelty of the Spaniards seems to harrow up his soul whenever it chances to be the subject of conversation. He laments bitterly that even at this distance of time, the wounds of the Indians seem to bleed afresh on the arrival of every new governor, whenever the smallest opportunity offers to gratify their malignant spirit. He says, he is well convinced, unless some great revolution should take place in this new world, that many nations of the Indians will absolutely become extinct. The population has decreased in an alarming degree for these last twenty years, and is felt more and more every succeeding year. Whether the Indians have retired to more remote districts, or they have been cut off by the small pox, or epidemic fevers, whatever may be the cause, certain it is, there are not now but very few townships that can send, if called upon, above a fourth part of the number they usually did.

These deficiencies are not so visible in Chili as in the provinces of Tucuman, Buenos Ayres, Cuyo, and Las Pampas. In the two latter it is most severely felt. The presidency Indians are daily diminishing by slow and imperceptible

means; and he fears will shortly altogether return to their former roving and unsettled habits. As none will be found capable of holding, in the bands of society, so many thousands, as those of the missionaries did: there must inevitably be fulfilled the words of the Scripture,—that the last state of these men will be worse than the first. Adieu.

LETTER XVI.

City of the Conception, Dec. 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

At length I have the happiness to say, I am left a few hours to myself, and instantly embrace it to communicate to you a few more of my observations. This city is, without all doubt, the best calculated for an immediate trade to the Philippines of any on the coast of Chili. I have this day been fortunate enough to fall in with a pilot who has been for the last fifteen years employed in the trade from hence to Manilla, where, he says, they always find a ready market for all European goods they might chance to have of any kind or sort. The product of Chili sent thither is principally corn, wine, and oil, copper, hides, and almonds. Also silver in bars, which the merchants at Conception take at Lima in exchange for their product, and send it off to Manilla, by which they get from three to four hundred per cent. clear profit, in time of peace : and all this is done in the course of four months at farthest, the whole of the voyage being made within the tropics. I very much regret my igno-

rance in nautical and commercial affairs, otherwise I could, I think, clearly point out the immense advantages that would arise to our nation, were we once in possession of the means of a free traffic to those islands. But you will say, how could such a desirable object be attained, seeing we are at war in Europe, and shall find work enough upon our hands at home? This I will allow, but at the same time can see no reason why we might not be able to equip a small fleet or squadron to send hither, and with them, a few good officers of the army to assist and bring about the restoration of the Indians. This city, as being so remote from the metropolis of the province, might be taken, in my opinion, with very little loss to either party: notwithstanding the strength of their forts, and the happy situation of the city itself, there is that within it, at present, that convinces me, I am right in hazarding such a conjecture. I do not regard their garrison, strong as it is, as of a nature to damp the courage and undaunted ardour of Britons, when roused to exertion in so honourable a cause, and which would be justified by Heaven. In the whole of our progress, I did not remark a single countenance that beamed with true genuine hilarity; not even when his lordship entered the city, at which time it is the usual etiquette for all the military, regulars and militia, to turn out, and

line the streets, with all the crown and civil officers in their formalities, and, in short, all the inhabitants, of what rank or class soever. The streets are thronged, from the precincts of the city to the grand place in which the cathedral stands, all doing homage as he passes; considering their spiritual lord as a being superior even to Majesty: but I am told his lordship's reception on this occasion was not attended with half the pomp and parade that heretofore awaited the grand prelate's entrée. There has recently been a commotion of the Indians at a presidency about twenty leagues from hence, under the protection of St. Gabriel, but which was under the more immediate control of the bishop. Some innovations were attempted to be made, which not one of the community could be brought to accede to; and the consequence was, that one morning when the usual bell rung for prayers, the rector was surprised to find that no one attended. The fiscal was immediately applied to, but he was absent, and, in a very short time, it was found the whole township was fled, and the fiscal with them. None but the rector, and his curate, and three servants, were to be met with. It is supposed that they are gone over to some roving Indians that have been in the neighbourhood for some weeks past, and who, about a fortnight be-

fore, had been down in considerable numbers, and menaced the inland forts. There is, I am convinced, something to be dreaded, but of what nature I cannot possibly divine. All seem to be very busily employed in every department of the state. The religious that used to be always in the fore-ground, are now, it is evident, returning to the back. French manners, teeming with irreligion, have reached even this part of the world. Not a word is dropped in conversation which in any manner alludes to the recent transactions in Europe; all companies are studiously silent; and so very preposterous is their silence, I am provoked to laughter at times to see how ingeniously they torment themselves. There are several French merchants here, but I know not how it is they will not be brought into familiar converse; although I am considered as one of the French king's most faithful subjects, yet they all politely shun me. Now would I give, with the highest degree of pleasure, a thousand piastres, to receive a letter from you, to inform me what is in agitation on your side the line, that can possibly affect a people residing at so remote a distance. I have twice hinted to my good Father my wishes to hear from my friends; but he also courted silence. The last time he stopped me short by saying,—“My son, be content, I pray

you, with what you already know ; time alone must accomplish your wishes : let us hope that we may return in safety next season to Buenos Ayres, where I think you will find every wish of yours gratified. I own this long stay far exceeds the purposed time of my absence ; but none of us can presume to be certain what he will do to-morrow : all must be left to the great Disposer of our lives. He alone sees and knows what is fittest for us, and, in his good time, will accomplish all. I must beg you will be upon your guard with whom you converse, even among the Brothers, as I am not certain of their fidelity to their vows ; and any man that makes an engagement with his God, and does not scrupulously abide by it, is, by no means, worthy the friendship of an honest man. I do not mean that you should deprive yourself of society ; continue, therefore, to mix with all as usual, but trust none. There are some disagreements at present subsisting respecting a confraternity of Indians ; how it will be decided I cannot take upon me to say. I am one of those that would strongly recommend new laws to be introduced and adopted by mild and conciliatory means. I can see no good can possibly arise from coercive measures, or opposing force to force ; it will not do ; yet it is in council decided to bring back by

force of arms the township that has fled. This, I am convinced, will not be effected. They might, by soothing means, be influenced, but not by violence; and sorry I am to think my lord bishop should issue such orders at a crisis like this, when the Indians' minds are inflamed with anger at what they deem an encroachment on their liberty and privileges; and it is the more to be lamented, because these Indians and their families are voluntary Christians, and came of their own free will to be baptized, and formed into a Christian community about twenty years ago, at which time, the prejudices against the Spaniards were carried to an alarming height by numberless tribes, and the disaffected were by far the most powerful; therefore, these worthy men should never have been molested. On the contrary, they should have had privileges and exemptions granted them, as they bid fair to have been a considerable community, the population having increased greatly within these last fifteen years; and they have proved themselves the most faithful friends of the Spaniards in all cases, and at all times, when their services were required. My mind is at this moment filled with doubts and fears of what may be the probable issue of this injudicious decision of attempting to recover these friendly people, who are, by nature,

of the most forbearing disposition ; but, once roused to opposition, none are more desperate or determined : nothing but death ends the struggle. But we have to thank all the governors and their descendants for the blood that has been wantonly shed. Their pride, cupidity, and rapacity, will, in the end, greatly lessen, if not wholly destroy the power of the Spanish monarchy in this great empire : for it is a known fact, that to establish permanent power, and to civilize savage people, they must be treated with humanity and patient attention ; but the Spaniards, without exception, are absolutely destitute of these virtues. Those who come from Spain, have uniformly had but one object in view, that of mending their fortunes ; and, to accomplish which, they care not to what desperate measures they have recourse. They are, in themselves, above all species of industry : they would rather die for want, than apply to mechanic arts or labour of any sort : and, as they are determined upon getting rich by some means or other, they fix on the poor defenceless Indians as the only instruments by which they can attain their desired object. The consequence of late is, that the Indians, since the expulsion of the Jesuits, have been oppressed beyond all former example. The heavy impositions that have been laid upon them

by every succeeding commander, whether in church or state, has sunk them to a situation of misery beyond description, and which it has been found they are unequal to bear, thousands having annually died under the rod of brutal power: but, of late, it seems to be an arrangement made by the Indians of the interior to come in large squadrons near the Spanish settlements, and make a real or pretended attack on all Spanish towns, or wherever there are any Indians employed by the Spaniards. As soon as their arrival is known, every Indian, whether old or young, will try to effect their escape, and take refuge among their independent brethren. These, of course, relate the afflictions they have endured, and that serves to strengthen the hatred and abhorrence they have inherited against the Spaniards, and not only against them personally, but against their religion, and from this cause spring all the disorders with which we are at this moment threatened; for this mode of going over to the roving Indians in such great numbers at once, as they have done of late, appears to argue a settled plan of operations, concerted by some able caciques, in order, I think, to concentrate and ascertain how many of their friends are in bondage, and to draw them off in security, amidst a formidable number, sufficient to overawe the

Spaniards, who might be rash enough to attempt their recovery, demanding them as their slaves.

“ On my journey to Cordova, and from thence to St. Jago, our caravan was surrounded eleven times ; but fortunately for us we had been attacked by a party led on by an aged cacique, who was a man of great power and influence, and who happened to have some knowledge of me, on an affair wherein one of his people was accused of a crime that condemned him to death. I happened to be present at his condemnation, and having reasons to think he had been unjustly accused and condemned, I took upon me to request a suspension for three days : with difficulty I obtained it, and instantly set about an investigation of the affair, and most fortunately succeeded in proving his innocence : on the second day, the proof I brought was conclusive, and the youth was liberated and restored to his friends. I had never seen the cacique from that period to the time of my journeying to Cordova ; and it was the third time that we had been set upon by the Indians, that I first saw him ; the two former were only scouring parties of Indians, who were satisfied with a boon of a few bottles of wine and brandy, with which they left us at liberty to pursue our journey. But the third time they issued from a wood, in such numbers, and headed by their caciques,

that we must inevitably have fallen into their power, had not this good old Indian recognised me : he was nearly in the centre of the circle, formed by the chiefs, when we descended from the waggons to pass before them, to ascertain who and what we were. I cannot describe to you the sensations I felt, when I saw the principal chief advance, throwing his spear on the ground, with a countenance overspread with apparent joy and gratitude. The whole movement halted in an instant, and I was, to the astonishment of all, clasped to the bosom of this venerable man. I did not recollect him ; he presently explained, and introduced me to all the chiefs, as the preserver of his only heir, for such it seems the young man was. From this incident the whole caravan was protected to Cordova, and from thence to St. Jago. Thus you may see, my son, that in the breast of an Indian, gratitude for a single good office, done towards him, binds more strongly than all the vaunted bonds of the most refined Christian. And happy indeed am I, whenever I reflect upon the circumstance, as this single incident, alone, would confirm all that I have said of the manly virtues and excellent dispositions of the Indians in general. I have urged my opinion strongly in the council, that mildness and persuasion only will effect any positive good with the Indians, either to retain

those at present under our subjection, or to recall those that are gone : whether my advice may have any effect I know not, but I should hope it would, for the sake of all : but be circumspect, I beg you ; we shall soon I trust be more tranquil, if my advice is attended to. As soon as the present business is ended, I think we shall proceed to the Imperial on some particular affairs, but I cannot distinctly say how long it will be before we set out ; but I should suppose in the course of eight or ten days." Here our converse was interrupted by a message from the bishop ; which I was extremely sorry for, as I always feel such secret pleasure in spending my hours with this most excellent man. He is not a Spaniard by birth, but a Modenese ; though let him have been of what nation soever, he would dignify it.

This city, in point of buildings, is not so splendid as St. Jago : all but the church and public edifices belonging to the crown, are raised in a plain and simple style ; the merchants here are the only rich inhabitants : but, although wealthy, they do not appear to live in that luxurious style that others cities run into : this may in some measure be attributed to its distance from the metropolis, the confined revenue of the bishop, and there not being so many rich monasteries as in St. Jago ; nor is there such a multitude of nunneries.

The dress of the ladies is more simple, and I think I may say more modest, than at St. Jago. A mixture of the French and Spanish every where prevails, in all the cities, but they tell me that great revolutions in fashion have taken place within these few years ; there being now no fixed standard for dress, all is as capricious here, as in Europe ; from whence great quantities of ladies' draperies are brought ; and sold in all the cities at an enormous centage : all these fripperies are brought to Lima from Europe, in Spanish bottoms, and from thence dispersed over Chili, and the cities east of the Cordillera. Now had I been a merchant what a fine traffic I might have pursued among the ladies, who would have hailed my coming with perfect delight. Whereas now my coming and going is nothing thought of ; I am a mere nonentity : therefore, all my thoughts, like the magnet, turn to one point, that of seeing Paraguay in arms, by the Indians, headed or led on by my countrymen, over the Cordillera to Chili. I am well convinced no power the Spaniards at present have, would be of force sufficient to prevent the Indians from making an entire conquest, and once more regaining their ancient possessions. Oh ! my friend, what a proud day would that be for Britain : could I live to see it, I should then say I had not lived in vain.

My time will again, I fear, be taken up in ar-

ranging my good Superior's papers, which are to be sent off very shortly to Rome. When that is finished I suppose we shall set off for the Imperial : but be assured I shall not let pass a single hour, that I may call my own, to write to you. This evening, we spend at the governor's, where I am led to expect some Frenchmen of distinction will be of the party. Adieu.

LETTER XVII.

The City of the Conception.

TO-MORROW we set off for the Imperial, from thence to Valdivia; and I believe it is his lordship's intention, to make an entire route through the whole districts that are in any way dependant upon this diocess; so that I shall have plenty to entertain you with at my return. One circumstance, that gives my valued friend, Father Pablo, great pleasure before he goes, is, that the design of bringing back the fugitive township, *vi et armis*, is given up, and the mild and gentle offerings of peace, and good fellowship are now finally decided on; and two very good men have been selected for the purpose of tendering the olive branch of peace.

But an Indian friend, whom I conversed with last night, assures me, that neither offerings of peace or war will now be of any avail, he being well convinced, by the route they have taken, it is their determination to remain among the tribes they have joined, till an event takes place, which they

have long expected; but, of what nature the event may be, he did not place confidence enough in me to say.

But I certainly guess, for yesterday morning one of the Indian shepherds, that resides at a chagre, about a league from the town, came in a great hurry to inform the community, that an assembly of the Indian chiefs is to take place in a few days, in the valley of Angol, which is expected to be the most numerous of any that has been for these last twenty years. This information has caused a grand council to meet at the governor's to-day. But what the result is, I know not, further than that it has hastened the journey of the grand Prelate. The shepherd told my Superior, that after the Indian assembly broke up, it would be very dangerous travelling, unless his lordship's guards were more numerous than they were on our journey hither. It is impossible to say for what object the Indian assembly may be called. It might be, he said, for war against the Spaniards, or it might be only to ascertain how many tribes they may be able to muster for hostilities: or, it might be to see how many of the tribes were reduced, in order to incorporate them into others. This latter custom they frequently adopt. When a tribe has lost its cacique, either by war, or the plague, or any other disastrous event, and they find themselves too

weak to resist any power that might be disposed to oppress them ; they immediately apply to a grand assembly, and, from among the caciques, they choose one, under whose protection they place themselves and families ; publicly acknowledging him their lord, and immediately assume the language and customs of the people into whom they are incorporated. These people are constantly known to be the most faithful of all the caciques' subjects, as long as he himself adheres to the condition which they stipulate, when they first enroll themselves under his protection ; but if he, in any ways, infringes on the agreement, they are not long in determining to seek another lord ; and, without any previous ceremony, quit his authority ; and, most commonly, join the roving Indians of the interior, which last has been mostly followed of late, to the great loss of the Spaniards in general, as many hundreds of them, belonging to the crown and the church, have not hesitated to go off in the same manner, whenever they could effect their escape : for this purpose, it is supposed that such multitudes of the unsubdued Indians have hovered recently so near the towns, that they might be at hand to receive and protect their wretched brethren. But this plan, as I remarked to you before, must have been laid down by the Indians who have come down either as tributaries or traders, and are well acquainted with

all the hardships and misery their fellow-creatures experience. God only knows what is in agitation ; but, most certainly, some great revolution is at hand, either here or on your side the world. Be it where it may, or on what side soever it commences, depend upon it the other will soon follow ; or at least will be attempted. But, I have not the smallest hope, that the Indians, of themselves, will ever make any effectual change in the system, as long as they have any of their people in alliance with the Spaniards, or hold any connexion whatever with them. As to their joining the disaffected Spaniards, and their French connexion, that will be still worse. I can plainly see that France is laying the most subtle plans, to gain a firm footing here : but I firmly hope, none of their schemes will take effect ; at least, in this hemisphere, whatever they may do in Europe. I have learned by accident, something of the Duke de B's. errand ; which turns out exactly as I suspected, when at Buenos Ayres. Three of his satellites are at present here. But, surely, the Almighty will not permit them to succeed. Ah, my friend ! was not my honour pledged to my highly esteemed Superior, how quickly could I unmask the whole of their intrigues. Surely, the Spanish monarch must be grossly cajoled, or there must be some desperate men at the head of affairs in that kingdom, who have power and influence to send hither

commanders like themselves, who are too much in love with French politics, to regard the good or safety of the colonies. All seem to aim at selfish and individual aggrandizement. I strongly suspect, that Buonaparte's grand scheme of universal monarchy has changed its object; and instead of subjugating the world in an eastern direction, he means it to begin in the south; that is, here, and it has often been a matter of astonishment to me, that he did not, in the first instance, cause his great talents to operate in this most desirable quarter, and leave the European sovereigns to contend among themselves, till he himself thought proper to return; and, like an overwhelming torrent, bear down all before him. But, in all probability he regarded this world as too easy a conquest, not at all worthy his great talents; and that nothing less than the subjection of ancient monarchies could in any way gratify his inordinate ambition.—Without being in the least acquainted with the transactions of Europe for the last eight years, I have noticed the gradual advances the French have made here, even at the remote distance of the city from which I am now writing, and the visible change I have observed in the customs and manners of those among whom I now reside.

The ignorance I am kept in as to every thing that relates to the war, leaves me only room to

conjecture, that our brave tars still hold dominion of the sea, and, by their glorious victories keep our inveterate enemy from effecting their deep laid schemes on this continent; which must in the end have the most direful consequences, both to the poor Indians, and in fact, to the whole world, should they ever be permitted to succeed. Whenever the idea of such a possible evil comes across my mind, I am sure to be seized with one of my old fits of dejection, and feel I could almost prefer annihilation to being witness to such an event; so much have I the interests of the poor natives at heart. I have made several essays to gain information of the friendly Indians, where and how far distant from the city the mines are, which governor Valdivia caused to be worked: all my attempts are however in vain; they will not afford me the smallest satisfaction; for whether an Indian be drunk or sober, he is ever obdurately silent on that subject. I have inquired respecting what became of the gold that was in the Conception, at the time the city was taken by Caupolicon; but all that I can learn of it is a tradition that the whole was, by the direction of the caciques, thrown into a lake about three leagues distant, which for its depth is called Del Fundo, and that five thousand men were employed for the space of forty days to effect it.

If this tradition be true, it may be easily guessed

what an immense quantity there must have been, of this seducing metal; which would, I think, had it been brought to Europe, and the mines still continued to be worked, most assuredly have turned all Europe mad. Such unaccountable power has it over the senses of men, and women too, you may say, for I do not mean to exclude the ladies from being alike infatuated; and I am of opinion, though contrary to the general received one, that the loss of this stupendous quantity of gold, and the loss of the mines, were two of the greatest blessings that could be showered upon mortals; for had it been allowed to be disseminated over Europe, all stimulus to industry and enterprise would have quickly ceased, and man would have become too proud, too indolent, and too avaricious, to retain one single innate virtue; agriculture and commerce, the grand basis of every state, would soon have been disregarded; genius would have sunk into apathy; idleness and poverty would have reigned triumphant: sensuality and debauchery would have been grand auxiliaries; and all must have sunk at last into an inevitable chaos: but the Almighty, in pity to his creatures, and in his all-wise dispensations, mercifully thought proper to overthrow in an instant, the grasping and insatiable designs of man, in order to convince him that he was not created to be an idle, but an active and industrious being, and to

improve the talents committed to his charge, by every honest exertion in his power: and is not the ground-work of our faith, founded upon that basis? I always held in the highest esteem, that precept in the Alcoran, which enjoins industry, and the necessity there is for even the Emperor to shew a specimen of his abilities, as an artizan, before the sword can be girded to his side, or he be declared the chosen Sovereign of all good Mussulmen.

I have this minute been directed to hold myself in readiness, to commence our journey to-morrow morning early; but what route we are to take, I know not, or when I shall be able to address you again. However, I have arranged matters that you may receive this with a large packet, among which you will find six plans that I have obtained, by means of a friendly Indian, with whom I have exchanged names, as the most sacred bond of friendship. Adieu.

2d June, 1814.

THE END.



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